The

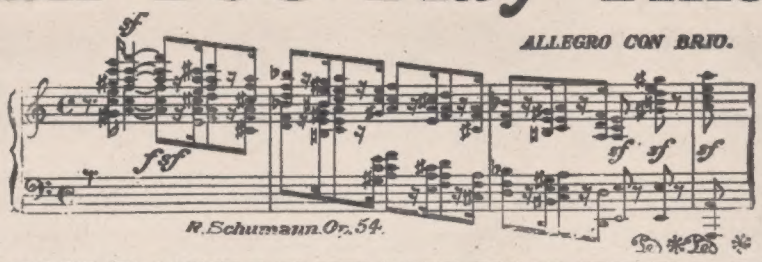
No. 342 (New Series), Vol. 7. October 8, 1938

TWOPENCE

PASSING SHOW

GINGER FOR PLUCK
by B. L. Jacot

Can YOU Play This?



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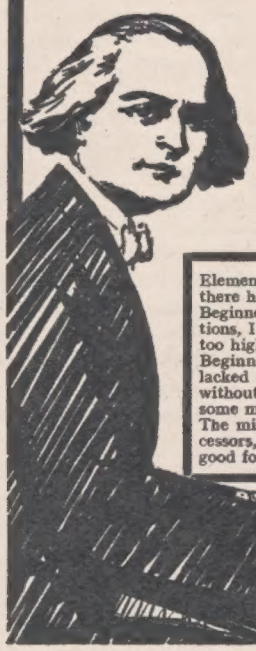

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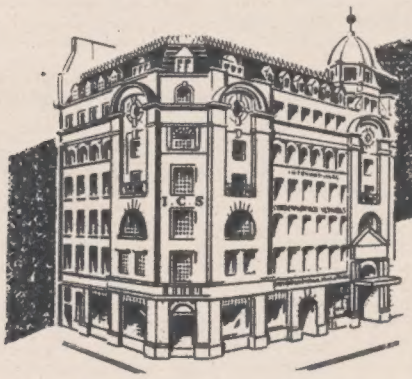

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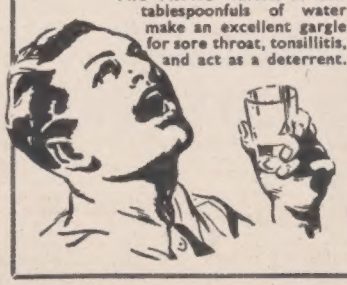

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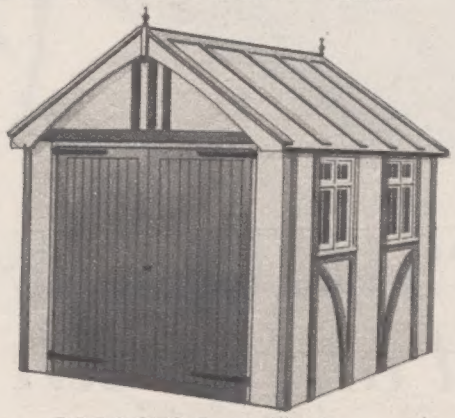

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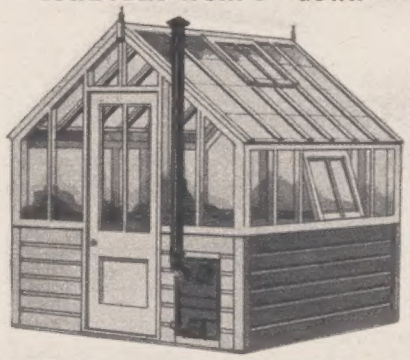

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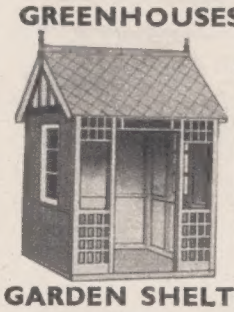

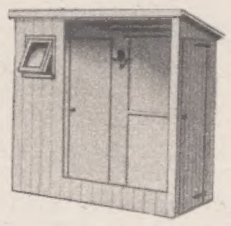

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P424A

The PASSING SHOW
No. 342 Vol. 7. OCTOBER 8, 1938

GINGER FOR PLUCK

The ginger cat was no ordinary animal. Had it been, it could never have made a raging lion of meek Mr. Lamb

BY B. L. JACOT

ILLUSTRATED BY S. TRESILIAN

AT the corner where his road branched off from the suburban avenue leading to the station, Mr. Lamb crossed over to the gravelled footwalk on the far side to continue his homeward journey under the hedgerow separating Acacia Road from the open fields to the south.

"Belleview," that red-tile and stucco villa whose white-painted gate he was entited to open and close with the feudal finality of a landed proprietor, lay back among the young trees on the other side of the road. Yet each evening, returning from the city, he made this slight detour.

Approached from its own side of the road, the detached residence that flaunted his life's savings presented but an end-on vista of neatly trimmed box hedging. From the southern flank, a threequarter aspect, embracing red roof and first floor windows, opened itself to merge imperceptibly into a full-face greeting when the never-surfeiting moment arrived to pull up directly opposite that gate.

A neat, fragile-looking man, with hands and feet that had been wasted on one of his sex, Mr. Sydney Lamb, of the Contracts Department, S and A Assurance Company, looked to his evening stroll up from the station as one of his few pleasures in life. It cost him nothing in a world where money was always short: it gave him fifteen precious minutes to himself, where there was no-one to override him in conversation and, finally, it offered, as on a stage, his house in all its suburban glory.

This evening he paused longer than was his wont, for the sun had beaten him. A great red penny balanced on the rim of the Surrey hills, crimson trailers still spread fanwise in its wake, silhouetting his western chimney pot against a dull blaze of fire.

He thought he caught a glimpse of Mrs. Lamb at a bedroom window and, with a guilty start, he stepped out to cross the road, but a second wary glance showed the maid and he stopped in his tracks to enjoy another moment.

There was something about the setting of the sun which made him linger, rousing his five-foot-seven of meagre manhood into a fainthearted rebellion against Life.

You would never have guessed it, but pirates, bloodshed, cutlasses, mad acts of gallantry on the high seas—this was the stuff on which he fed his inner thoughts. But there are no revolvers about life insurance, and acts of gallantry, however restrained, are apt to be misconstrued in a busy city office. . . . He removed his soft felt hat, and absently stroked at the streaks of grey about his narrow temples.

It was as he stretched out his hand for the catch of the gate that it began to happen. He became aware of something in the hedge. The green privet shook under the press of an unseen force. There came a scrape against the inside of the deal boundary wall and, as he withdrew his arm, the head and paws of a strange cat appeared over the ledge.

For a moment the animal eyed him distrustfully. An enormous brute, its flaming ginger head was the size of a young cabbage. The almond eyes were clear as amber and bottomless as a lake; and the fore paws, with their needle claws extended, were as broad as half-crown pieces.

"Shoo!" Mr. Lamb managed. Commands, even to animals, had a habit of turning to absurdities on his lips, and the suddenness of it had startled him.

The cat's amber eyes were impassive—a hundred miles away beyond the owner of the house. Drawing up his back legs with the uncanny silence that goes with feline grace, the brute balanced for a moment on the top of the fence then dropped, effortlessly, on to the footwalk at Mr. Lamb's feet. Squatting on his haunches, the cat turned his attention to a toilet of the paws.

In the ordinary way, Mr. Lamb would have passed in to make his belated evening greeting to the lady whose word was more than law. But something about the cat—its unusual size, its vivid colouring, its disregard of the word of command, its uncanny eyes, perhaps—made him pause. It was a magnificent brute. As with the Rugby footballers he used to go and see at Twickenham, there was something about this cat that moved him to admiration for might and courage.

He had always wanted a pet—a bird even, but Constance, his wife, kept the home far too spotless to allow of that. He gave the animal a further "Shoo!" as he opened the gate, and a look of mild surprise crept into the creature's eyes. It stopped licking and strolled over to the man's boots. A

(please turn over)

sniff round the heel and an inch or so up the trouser leg, and the tail rose like a flaming mast in the stern. Mr. Lamb moved away, but the cat followed, rubbing its ginger pelt against his legs.

He closed the gate behind him, but the animal took it at a bound. The merest touch on the top and it dropped, silent as a dead leaf, on to the gravel at his side. It was purring, now ; a throb, mellow as a distant drum, ingratiating as the subtlest flattery, warm as the fireside rug.

"Puss, puss !" offered the householder, safe from observation by the twist in the drive. It flattered him to have such a fine animal notice him. Even his own office-boys had little true respect for Mr. Lamb and in unvarnished truth there were few dogs in the neighbourhood who thought it worth while even to bark at him. This cat—this magnificent champion among cats—was an epoch-making exception. He warily stroked its head.

The cat yawned, disclosing a gaping row of fangs, and began to move away.

"Puss, puss !" Mr. Lamb cried quickly. "*Pussie !*"

For a moment the animal hesitated, then—to the astonishment of the man squatting on his heels on the gravel—turned back to his side.

"Shoo !" ordered Mr. Lamb.

From the depths of those amber eyes the cat eyed him sadly for a moment—then, lowering the colours flaunted in that mast-like tail, moved meekly away.

Mr. Lamb filled his chest. "Puss !" he called, in a voice that made him glance nervously over his shoulder at the house. "Come here, puss !"

The cat returned obediently to his feet. There was no doubt about it. This king among cats had met his master !

"Leave Constance alone!" thundered Mr. Lamb, and with that sentiment he became concious of a face at the bedroom window. "For a long time something has been growing between Connie and myself that shouldn't be there! That thing is you, YOU!"

Just when Mr. Lamb decided that the cat must be his, he was never quite sure. It was not until he was actually inside his own hall, the giant purring round his legs, that he considered what Constance would have to say. If he cried : "*Outside !*" the magnificent creature would obey him, but he did not want the cat to go. Neither, so he reasoned, did this king among cats. It was an idea !

"Constance !" he called.

His wife appeared from the room on the left. It was clear she was somewhat startled.

"What's that cat doing in the house?" she demanded. "And what are you shouting like that for?"

The cat's back was arched and in reply to the question it spat triple-essence of fury at the mistress of the house. Mr. Lamb picked up his cat. He knew what he was going to do.

"I called you to show you my cat," he said quietly. "Isn't he a beauty?"

"You couldn't——" Mrs. Lamb began, but she stopped. She had never seen her husband with this look in his face.

"I could," he said. "And I am."

"Very well," Mrs. Lamb managed at length, and closed the door of the sitting-room behind her far too quietly.

The meal that night was a trial for Mr. Lamb. The brief interval before the Chinese gong sounded from the hall below he had spent grooming the cat's coat in his bedroom, balancing him—he was a tom, of course—on the corner of the mantelpiece and caressing the luxury of his pelt with an old hair brush.

It shone like satin, and it was perhaps the similarity in the words that made him think of "Satan." The cat represented the da k and mysterious; it suggested power and ferocity; it breathed a magnificent detachment from the puny comings and goings of this vulgar world. Satan, Mr. Lamb thought, was a good name.

Satan ignored Mrs. Lamb now as they dined, but he spat repeatedly at Hetty, the sister-in-law who had lived with them for years as housekeeper, and once Mr. Lamb thought the animal was going to make a meal of her, such was his rage.

Yet—and here was the miracle—this Hitler among cats, at a careless downward thrus of Mr. Lamb's fingers rose on tip-toe to press his gleaming pelt against his master ! There were no worlds a man could not conquer with such an ally at hand.

Throughout the earlier part of the meal, Mr. Lamb was conscious that the women had been in conference. There was the stony silence, sly glances, suggestive nods. Once Hetty began some remark, but dropped it at a glance from Mr. Lamb. He had managed, for a mild man, to put a good deal into that glance.

Most of the difficulty in the family came from Hetty. Older than Mrs. Lamb, she sought to justify her existence at "Belleview" in a loosely defined domestic character. But as Constance did the shopping, superintended the housework, and managed such of the cooking as could not be

entrusted to the maid, this acid spinster fell back upon a frustrated interference with everything.

But for that one solitary beginning of a remark, the meal, as far as the women went, ended in silence. Mr. Lamb loitered over his courses to his heart's content; he made a point of drinking (with relish) with his food, a habit that never failed to rouse the dyspeptic Hetty to comment; he rolled his bread into footballs, dribbling them with his fingers and scoring goals between his tumbler and the vase. Something perverse urged him to comment on the food.

"These fritters," he said, turning one over on the plate before him. "Scarcely warmed through!" He pushed the plate a highly significant two inches from him.

From the other end of the table came a quick intake of breath. But nothing else.

Constance was a fine cook. Under the goad of her elderly sister she could be acid in manner to the man she took pains to feed well, but—he had admitted it often—her domineering tongue was the only thing he regretted in her. Besides, the fritters were as perfect as ever. He hated to leave them on his plate, but he realised the importance of the issue at stake.

Next morning he was up early. Satan had slept at the foot of his bed, and for half an hour they walked together in the garden. Mr. Lamb was proud to show the house and its grounds to that monarch of cats, but strangely he was perhaps prouder still to have Satan stepping elegantly at his heels as he wandered about his gravelled paths.

At the french windows of the dining-room Hetty stopped him.

"This nonsense of that cat," she began, a shade too hurriedly. "I'm not going to stand by and see dear Constance bullied like this. I don't know what's come over you! But understand this. Either that brute goes, or I do."

"Is that definite, Hetty?"

"So you're coming to your senses!" the spinster began. "The idea of bringing home that——"

"Satan's not going," he told her quietly. "Whether you go or stay is your own affair. I shan't try to stop you, I can assure you." He turned away to continue his stroll round by the kitchen and the back of the garage.

His wife was watching him, puzzled, when he left to catch his train. At her bedroom window she was trying to piece it all together. In Sydney's stride was the hint of a swagger, and it recalled for her the days when he used to come visiting at her mother's house. Mrs. Lamb could not think what had come over her husband. Never to ask her leave—even hint, or warn! Just to walk in with a cat, and start ordering everyone about in a very strange way. Long after he had disappeared round the corner she decided there had been something new about his bowler hat. The tilt, perhaps, or the way he wore it. And that reminded her of the old days, too.

"Have you got the key to his room?" asked a voice at her elbow.

She jumped guiltily. "Sydney's? Of course. The room has to be done."

"Give it to me. I'll deal with that cat of his!"

To prevent him following his master to the station, Satan had been locked in Mr. Lamb's bedroom. "D'you think we ought——"

"Don't be a fool, Constance," the spinster said sharply. "Life won't be worth living if you don't make a stand. He'll be bringing all the stray dogs in the neighbourhood in next."

"It's only one cat."

"One is enough for a start! Give me that key, unless you want the house full of monkeys and things by the end of the week."

Mrs. Lamb was thinking of the rakish tilt to that bowler hat and she had to fumble awhile before she handed the key to her sister. Anyone who hesitated with this dyspeptic spinster was lost.

During the long years of residence at "Belleview" Mr. Lamb had come to estimate his paces on that morning walk to the station within millimetre limits. Practice had made him perfect; there was not a hazard on the route that could make him waste half a minute on the station in unnecessary waiting, or exert himself a step more than the occasion demanded through cutting it too fine. Yet that morning—the first time ever—he missed his train.

He could recall in early days having to hurry on occasion, and once or twice he might have had to cover the last thirty yards in a run. But to miss the train hopelessly and magnificently, it was undreamt of! Although he was unaware of it, that swagger was responsible.

When he arrived on the platform there was not even a view of the back of the guard's van in the distance. He discovered the calamity did not concern him much.

He weighed himself on a penny-in-the-slot machine and stamped out his name on an aluminium slip at a neighbouring apparatus and read his paper. Then whistling through his teeth he caught the 9.36 when it arrived—the city magnates' train.

The 9.14 had its third-class carriages full and its first empty. With the 9.30 the process was reversed. Sydney found himself travelling with men who lived on dividends and directors' fees—a nerve shattering experience in the ordinary way, but he was thinking of Satan—not of directors—as he gazed dreamily out of the window of his carriage.

On the inside of the door of "Contracts," Thompson, a junior new to insurance, stopped him.

"I say, Mr. Lamb!" he exclaimed. "You should see the mess they're in in your department! They can't get started. I've never known you late before——"

"I don't suppose you have," Mr. Lamb told him shortly. "I never have been. What's wrong? Mr. Bordass is there, isn't he?"

The junior grinned.

"Mr. Bordass doesn't even know where the keys are! He's shouting at everyone, and they've been telephoning to your home, and——"

"Have—have I been asked for, then?"

"Asked for! The whole building's been looking for you!"

Mr. Lamb lingered no longer. The mahogany desks of "Contracts" were adrift with confusion. Bordass was lost. Queries and demands bounced off him as off rubber. The department was already half an hour lagging, and every minute took this unit further out of synchronisation with the other parts of the machine.

As Mr. Lamb appeared, slightly flushed, in the midst of it all, a dozen voices greeted him simultaneously with a dozen questions. But he paid no attention to them. His eye was riveted on a tall, sallow man who had arrived on the scene, simultaneously. That flustered hen, Bordass, had not seen him.

"Morning, Sir Clement!" Mr. Lamb greeted easily. He was wondering how much this Scottish baronet, who was their managing director, had seen and heard.

The director beckoned to the employee who was late for his work, and Mr. Lamb followed him out of the long, glass-lined room.

"Sit down, Lamb," Sir Clement said when they reached the director's room.

Instead of trembling he found himself holding Sir Clement's keen gaze on level terms.

"You were late, this morning, Lamb?"

"I missed my train, Sir Clement. The first time I've been more than five minutes out of time for 16 years."

The Scot on the other side of the desk inclined his head in silence. "Tell me," he put in at length, "is your department always in a mess like that when you're away?"

"It isn't my department," he put in, with a quick confidence that amazed him, and the other nodded in acknowledgment of the point. "I've never been away from it before except for holidays each year. And then I've been able to arrange for things ahead."

"How old are ye, Lamb?"

"I'm 34 years old, sir."

"Married?"

"Yes, sir. No children." Mr. Lamb had a wild idea to mention Satan.

"It's a pity," mused Sir Clement. "How long have you been with Contracts?"

"Nine years."

"Well, they certainly seem to miss you." He rose abruptly to his feet. "That'll be all, Lamb. I think you'll be having a change soon. But I shouldn't make a habit of being late. A man like you is far too valuable."

As Sydney reached the door of the sanctum, the older man stopped him.

"Perhaps I'd better be walking back with you," he said, with a thin-lipped smile.

Inside the glass-lined department of Contracts once more, he laid his hand on the younger man's shoulder. "Let's see what you can make of this now, Lamb," he said in a voice that was meant to, and did, carry. His wave of the arm embraced the room from the red face of Bordass to the litter of papers. Mr. Lamb's head rose still a little farther on his shoulders. He was wishing he had Satan with him now!

Mr. Lamb did not linger that night on his walk up from the station. Satan would be waiting for him up in his bedroom and after the day's happenings in Contracts, he felt less of an impostor about receiving tribute from him.

In the hall he caught a glimpse of Hetty disappearing through a door, and noted a grin on her face. When he unlocked his door he knew what that grin was about.

Satan was gone: Satan who had looked on him and found the stuff to build up adoration: Satan, the bulwark against the contempt of the rest of the world, Mr. Lamb's confidence evaporated. His new ego was pricked. He knew now he would never have the courage to face Hetty. He knew she had done it. That smile was enough in itself. But now, with the ginger tiger gone. . . .

Sneaking out of the house by the back stairs, he disappeared down the garden. He dared not risk meeting Constance yet and he knew what to expect from the spinster, when she realised the position.

As he trod softly among the currant bushes and glass frames at the end of the garden his heart was full of bitterness. "Why couldn't they have left me my cat?" he moaned.

A mere shadow of the perky little citizen who had lost his train that morning, he was on the verge of tears. The thought of Sir Clement now made him tremble. To think of the things he had said to him that morning! After that impertinence he would never be able to meet the director's eye again.

A voice hailed him through the trees. It was useless to duck. He awaited the coming of his sister-in-law like a bird fascinated by a snake. "I want a word with you, Sydney," she said, and there was victory in her voice. "I've not yet had your explanation about that cat you brought home with you last night. Have you been feeling unwell?"

"Well, I——" he began weakly. "I—saw it in the drive. It followed me to the house." He broke off to dab the grey streaks on his temples. This was treachery to a noble animal!

"Followed you!" the spinster snorted. "Are you a child? The animal is safe now. I took it this morning to the Police Station. It will be destroyed in three days if not claimed."

"Destroyed? Satan?"

Mr. Lamb's eyes were drawn to the lean wrists hugging the waistline of the scraggy figure, and satisfaction moved him at the sight of bandages over the right hand. Satan, whom he had betrayed, had done his best. Dispirited, he edged away towards the path leading round the bottom of the garden in between the rhododendrons and the wooden fencing.

(*please turn to page* 31)

Continuing the series, "Romance of Red-headed Women," here is the story of the Duchess of Portsmouth, who began life in France and was sent to England to influence King Charles the Second in three important State matters. On her arrival at Dover, Evelyn called her

BABY FACE

BY W. J. PASSINGHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD LAMPITT

ON the afternoon of June 30, 1670, that power called "Destiny," which shapes the devious paths of all mankind, was moving to its inexorable purpose in the private apartment of the "Grand Monarch," Louis XIV of France. Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, had died within the hour, which was a serious matter for French foreign policy at a moment when her influence had secured the signature of King Charles II of England to a secret treaty of vital importance.

It seemed that only the influence of Henrietta over her brother Charles had brought the English monarch to sign such a dangerous document as the Treaty of Dover—and now that she was dead, so also was the hard-won contract. The Duchess was the only witness to the treaty, and it was certain Charles would repudiate his signature at the slightest sign of danger from a Parliament he feared. In truth, had the English Parliament learned the terms of the Treaty of Dover, Charles himself might soon have been as dead as his sister—and that after the fashion of his misguided father.

"Our influence at Whitehall is done," Louis said bitterly to his ambassador, Colbert de Croissy.

"I think not, Sire," Croissy answered, calmly. "Our real influence in England is but begun. The late Duchess of Orleans was not, as is generally supposed, responsible for the King of England's signature to the treaty. Your Majesty may remember a certain maid of honour in the duchess's retinue when she crossed to Dover—a lady with auburn hair about which you were pleased to remark?"

"You mean the lovely Breton—Louise de Kérouaille? A mere girl of twenty?"

"Precisely!" The ambassador stepped closer to his royal master. "That same girl, Sire, is now the hope of France in England. I tell you that the silk ribbon which fastens round the waist of the lovely Louise is the zone that will bind France and England! Lord Arlington, the Secretary of State, will aid us if you send the girl to Whitehall."

"And her instructions?"

"Her instructions, Sire, will be no less than the fulfilment—one by one—of the terms of the Treaty of Dover!"

"And you think there is a chance of success?" Louis asked, incredulously.

"Yes, Sire, if only we act quickly. At Whitehall the king grows tired of Lady Castlemaine. But for the presence of his sister, the late duchess, at Dover recently, he might have persuaded Louise de Kérouaille to prolong her stay in England."

"We can but try," Louis said, doubtfully. "See to the matter at once, Croissy."

So earnestly did the French ambassador talk to Louise Renée de Penencouet de Kérouaille that, a few weeks later, she was again on her way from Calais to Dover—and the manner of her journey proved that Colbert de Croissy was not mistaken about the impression she had already made upon the susceptible King of England. When Charles learned of her coming in the company of the ambassador, he ordered the royal yacht to meet Louise at Calais. Thus did she arrive at Dover in royal state, to become the very pivot on which turned the ambitious foreign policy of France.

Charles brought a crowd of his courtiers to meet the new favourite at Dover, and even England's statesmen travelled there secretly to view one reputed to be "the loveliest woman in Europe." While her undoubted beauty left the great majority of English people breathless with admiration, at least one among them was not impressed by the girl from Brittany. Evelyn, the famous diarist, wrote: "In my opinion, she is of a childish, baby face."

He was probably the first Englishman to discover the secret of Louise de Kérouaille. Her innocent, childlike expression at first deceived the spies at Whitehall. But behind the mask of "Baby Face" worked a keen, calculating mind, an iron will and a self-control which remained unshaken even before the clever wit and coarse raillery of Nelly Gwynn—Louise's bitterest rival for the royal favour. Louise's real work was bound up with the terms of the Treaty of Dover. Through her influence, Louis of France hoped to gain three great advantages. The first was an alliance with England which would leave France free to attack Holland and the second was an open profession by Charles of the Catholic faith. Perhaps the most impudent attempt of all at interference in English affairs was the third advantage to France—that a Catholic wife be found for James, Duke of York, the king's brother, and heir presumptive to the throne of England!

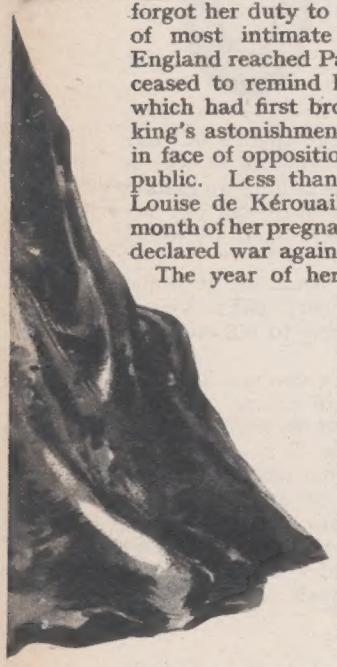
On her arrival in London, Louise was created a Maid of Honour to Queen Catherine—a sound excuse for the Frenchwoman's presence at Whitehall. Poor Catherine, far from her friends and relatives in Portugal, and Queen of England only in name, accepted another of Charles' mistresses without complaint. Within a few months the French ambassador was able to report to King Louis:

"The influence of the Duchess of Cleveland (Lady

Louise was faced with the hatred of the Duchess of Cleveland, the Duchess of Richmond, the theatrical ladies led by Nell Gwynn, and the hatred of all other members of the royal seraglio because of the affection Charles displayed openly for her son.

Castlemaine) visibly wanes. While she loses favour, the King of England's fancy for Mademoiselle de Kérouaille grows stronger. It is certain that the king shows a warm passion for her; and perhaps you may have heard from other sources what a finely furnished set of lodgings have been given to her at Whitehall. His Majesty goes to her rooms at nine o'clock every morning, never stays less than an hour there and often remains until eleven o'clock."

Throughout years of life spent as a star in "the most licentious court in Europe" Louise never forgot her duty to the French king, and her reports of most intimate affairs in the government of England reached Paris regularly. King Louis never ceased to remind her of the three herculean tasks which had first brought her to Whitehall. To the king's astonishment, she accomplished the first one in face of opposition from all classes of the English public. Less than two years after the arrival of Louise de Kérouaille in England, and in the sixth month of her pregnancy—March, 1672—King Charles declared war against Holland.



The year of her son's birth, 1672, was one of triumph for Louise, and she sent a petition to the King of France for leave to become an English subject so that—"I can benefit by the gifts and favours which King Charles wishes to lavish upon me." Soon after her naturalisation, Louise received the titles of Baroness of Petersfield, Countess of Farnham, and Duchess of Portsmouth. Charles also promised to create her a Lady of the Bedchamber, so that she would rank as high as any other of the king's mistresses.

In that same year the title of Duke of Richmond was rendered vacant, and Louise grasped at this opportunity to ennoble her son. Louise's claim was promptly opposed by the Duchess of Cleveland, who wanted the title for *her* son, and insisted that he should have precedence over "the brat of a French hussy." Charles attempted to appease both these ladies by making his two illegitimate sons dukes simultaneously. But the precedence so dear to the Duchess of Cleveland depended upon which patent was signed first, and a struggle began which developed into a battle royal at Whitehall.

The new Duchess of Portsmouth persuaded the Lord Treasurer to receive her attorney secretly at midnight—just as his lordship was about to enter his coach for a journey to Bath—and affix the seal to the patent of the Duke of Richmond. When the news reached the Duchess of Cleveland next morning she fainted away in the king s arms. To console her, the king raised all the Duchess of Cleveland's children to the peerage, and it was pointed out by a contemporary writer that "In a few years England will be so happy as to see an entire House of Lords extracted out of the Royal Blood."

This sudden elevation of all her children to the peerage, however, so overcame the Duchess of Cleveland that her personal expenditure increased to a point where Charles refused to meet it. She was obliged to retire to the Continent to escape her creditors, leaving the Duchess of Portsmouth with only Nell Gwynn as a serious rival. But the retirement of the Duchess of Cleveland did not ease the burden upon the English taxpayers.

In the Exchequer archives there are entries made in two columns of sums paid to the Duchess of Portsmouth and to Nelly Gwynn. These show that from June 3 to December 30, 1676, the Duchess was paid £8,773 compared with £2,862 to the "orange-girl." In the following year, the Duchess had £27,300, while Nelly had to be content with £5,250. Below these expenses for the two royal charmers is an item "to Miss Chaffinch" of £1,200—for showing ladies of easy virtue up the back stairs to the king's rooms in Whitehall. On the same page of the Exchequer archives are named several concubines as receiving sums ranging from £50 to £500 a year.

With such company did Louise de Kérouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth, compete for supremacy, and she reigned triumphant for several years. The English people now knew her for a French spy, and their growing hatred for Louise was shared by the House of Commons which was determined to prevent a conquest of the Netherlands by France. Meanwhile, Louise went on steadily piling up English treasure for herself. She secured her yearly pension of £12,000 by arranging for it to be paid "out of the wine licenses and be reversible to her heirs forever." During the year 1681 the "French slut"—Louise's title in English political circles—drew £136,668 from the Treasury.

Her apartments in Whitehall were the envy of all who saw them. Crowds of people came merely to gape at the marvellous gold plate and valuable furniture with which every room was crammed. Her wealth, her wonderful beauty, which seemed to increase rather than fade with the passing years, were topics of conversation for the whole nation.

In the memoirs of Madame de Sévigné is written: "La Kerouaille has not been frustrated in anything she has undertaken. She determined to be the mistress of the King and she has succeeded; she wished for a son and she had one, and he has been openly acknowledged and ennobled by his father. But she now has a rival in the shape of the young actress who is called 'Gwynn.'"

The rising tide of public opinion against Louise warned her that her position was but a temporary one—dependent entirely upon her influence over the king. To secure herself against the day of exile, therefore, she sought to establish a refuge in France.

It was the influence of the King of England, on behalf of a spy for France, that secured for Louise the ducal fief of Aubigny with all its hereditary advantages. Thus to her list of titles was added that of Duchesse d'Aubigny.

This effort to safeguard herself in France proved to be a timely move on the part of clever Louise, for soon after she became Duchesse d'Aubigny there landed at Torbay a woman whose beauty was, for a time, to eclipse her own. The lady who came to England by way of the Devon coast was the Duchesse Mazarin, and when Charles saw her he forgot everything else. Hortense Mazarin's beauty was marvellous, according to the writers of her time, and it was of that type which needs no artificial aids to perfection. She caused a sensation at Whitehall, and it seemed that the Duchess of Portsmouth's day was indeed done.

Louise retired from London society for a few years while Charles and Hortense lived and loved at Whitehall. But the Duchess of Portsmouth had the satisfaction of seeing Charles return to her a few years later, although he came as a sick man.

The sudden death of Charles took Louise by surprise, however, and many of her most valued possessions remained in England after her flight to France. She found the French king very grateful for the valuable services she had rendered her country for so many years. Louise also earned the gratitude of the Church of Rome, for on his deathbed the King of England had embraced that faith which enabled him to die with all the privileges of the church.

Thus was the second clause of the Treaty of Dover fulfilled.

Although she came back to France with considerable wealth, Louise found it insufficient to maintain her through many years of old age in the state to which she was accustomed. In restoring her estates of Aubigny, which she found in a condition of decay, Louise spent nearly all her fortune. Her son, ancestor of the Dukes of Richmond, died, and she who was once surrounded by admirers at Whitehall lived a very lonely life in her later years. She never relinquished the title of Duchess of Portsmouth, even in France, and preserved her wonderful beauty in a fashion that amazed all who knew her.

Voltaire wrote of Louise: "Never did woman preserve her charms so late in life. At the age of seventy she was still lovely, her figure stately, her face unfaded."

When her fortune was gone and she was beset by creditors, Philippe, Duc d'Orleans, Regent of France, granted her a State pension of 8,000 livres—"in the name of the great services she has rendered France." The Regent declared that by her diplomatic relations with King Louis XIV she had altered the destiny of Europe.

Louise de Kérouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth, and one of the most remarkable courtesans history has recorded, died in Paris, on November 14, 1734, at the age of eighty-five.

Another article in this series will appear in a fortnight

IF ever you are tempted to suggest that seeing is believing, remember the case of Mr. Voronezh, who once saw too much

PAID WITHOUT PROTEST

BY C. F. HALL

ILLUSTRATED BY CLIVE UPTTON

ON the frosted glass of the office door the simple legend, in severely plain black lettering, "M. Voronezh: Financial Adviser," radiated an air of dry, business virtuousness which might well inspire confidence in the bosoms of wavering clients. "Financial Adviser" is so resplendent, and withal so non-committal a term: its resonant syllables may be construed in so many ways and, if you will have it so, cover a multitude of sins.

In the present case, one who knew Mr. Marcus Voronezh would have said unhesitatingly that they stood for moneylender, bucket-shop keeper, patents exploiter, bubble company promoter, small-time swindler, confidence man and graft merchant. All of these activities Mr. Voronezh included in his repertoire, together with any others that might offer opportunities for making easy money for a person whose respect for the law extended only beyond the limits at which it could be safely evaded.

At the moment, however, anyone more scrupulous and benign, in outward appearance at least, would have been hard to find.

Mr. Voronezh sat at his neat, maple-wood desk, fingering idly the exquisite white carnation in his lapel and gazing blankly out at a drear vista of empty office windows across the narrow courtyard. Though he gazed, it can scarcely be said that he had any interest in empty offices, or even that he saw them. Inwardly he was filled with the mellow glow of content which comes to one who recounts, mentally, a successful business deal. Already that morning, two useful sums of fifty pounds had enriched his private account.

That both of these were from elderly ladies of slender means in return for shares in a Bolivian tin mine whose worth would have been highly questionable at five shillings caused no twinges at all in Mr. Voronezh's mind. Indeed, if he had thought of them, it would have been with that certain contempt which most pithily expresses itself in the phrase, "Poor suckers!"

The imperative burr of the telephone bell cut into his dreams of rose-and-gold, and recalled him to a world where the demands of business are stern and unremitting. As he placed the receiver to one shell-pink ear, his features and voice alike were bland, courteous and dignified.

"Good morning, Mr. Voronezh," came the disembodied voice over the wires, "My name is Anthony Charles de Palos, and I'm afraid we have never had the pleasure before of becoming acquainted, for regrettable as it is to admit it, it is a name which so far has been the reverse of famous or notorious. I am an inventor, and I have a project which I feel sure will gain your interest and enthusiasm. You do, I believe, occasionally purchase the patent rights in inventions which seem to promise well?"

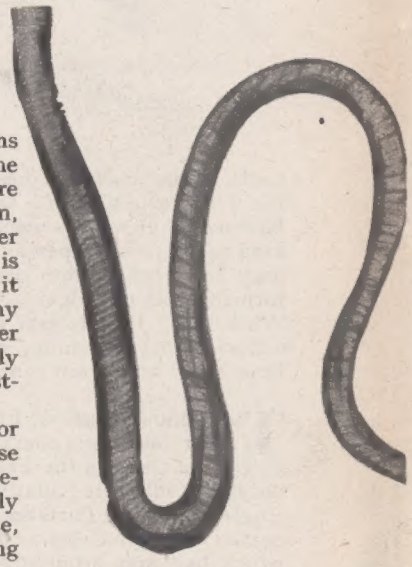
The voice was young, it was cultured, and had an indefinable, quiet firmness. Not a likeable voice, Marcus decided; he had an inherent dislike of firm, hard young people.

"Why, Mr. de Palos," he replied, "it is true that I have occasionally interested myself in one or two small novelties, but I do not make a practice of it. Purchasing patents is a very risky business in these days, since it by no means follows that a workable idea can be made to catch the public's favour; we have to be perfectly sure, too, that a theoretical idea is practically sound; then again, the cost of popularising and selling an article or process is frequently prohibitive. Just what line does your invention take?"

"You need have no fear, Mr. Voronezh, of this article not proving admirably saleable or practical. Briefly, it may be described as an instrument for obtaining visual as well as audible telephonic communication. By means of a small receiver, which is clipped on to the telephone line, the person who is speaking over the 'phone can gain a perfect view of the one with whom he is conversing, together with his immediate surroundings——"

"My dear young man, are you trying to tell me something about television?" interrupted Marcus sceptically.

"No, no, please do not misunderstand me. Television is a cumbersome and expensive method of seeing at a distance, and embodies a totally different principle. No, this little Phonovisor, as I have termed it, utilises only the minute electrical currents in the telephone, together with the completely new amplifying and scanning method embodied in the receiver case which forms the main secret of the process. It costs no more than a wireless set to run, since it derives its power from dry batteries; it is compact and portable; it can be attached to any telephone, of no matter what make; there is only one tuning knob, for adjusting the clarity of vision.



"You can imagine for yourself the value of these Phonovisors on every telepone; they cost roughly three pounds to produce, well within the purchasing power of any home using a 'phone. Anyone who sees one in operation is sure to want to buy; imagine the convenience of friends being able to see each other while talking, to exhibit books, pictures, frocks; the housewife can buy her meat, her confectionery, crockery, linen, by seeing them over the 'phone; the——"

"You've no need to tell me what use it would be if there were such an instrument," cut in Voronezh, testily, "but you're not trying to tell me it's a practical proposition, are you?"

"Why, Mr. Voronezh, perhaps you would like a small demonstration? I have of course, my own constructed Phonovisor attached to my telephone here, and if you will permit me to describe what you are wearing. . . . I admire your white carnation, for instance; it is a particularly beautiful specimen, and harmonises well with your grey suit and brown-flecked tie. The handkerchief in your breast pocket has a narrow green border, and a little to your right, on the desk, is a small vase of bronze chrysanthemums."

Marcus' lower jaw appeared to be suddenly overcome by the effect of gravitation, and his eyes suffered from a peculiar distending. He croaked once or twice.

Suddenly he whipped his fountain pen from the ink-stand and scribbled feverishly and meaninglessly over the desk.

"What am I doing now?" he rasped.

"Why, I'm afraid you're spoiling a perfectly good fountain-pen nib, beside marring the surface of an excellent office desk. Really, you know——"

But Marcus had dropped the telephone and with scarlet face and incoherent vocal noises was rushing about the room as one demented. He ripped a water-colour from the wall, stood it upside-down in a chair and placed a brass ornamental vase before it. Approaching his desk again, he picked up the telephone receiver gingerly as though expecting it to turn and bite him.

De Palos was laughing, coolly and quietly. "A very nice still-life arrangement of the vase, water-colour and chair; reminds me of my art class days when I was very young. Well, Mr. Voronezh, I shall require five thousand pounds for all plans and a model and, on due consideration I am sure you will agree that that is a very moderate sum. I will ring you to-morrow at the same time to see if we can make any further arrangements. Think over what I have said. Good-day."

Despite Marcus' frenzied shout there came the click of a replaced receiver, and silence. Hastily he called exchange.

"Can you trace that call which came through just now, or put me through to the fellow again; I must get hold of that man again. I was not finished."

The voice of the operator was cool and reproving. Perhaps she knew Mr. Voronezh. "I am sorry, but the call was put through on the dial system; we cannot trace that," and the chrysanthemums received the plump man's anguished remarks with an air of shocked reproach.

Mr. Voronezh spent the rest of the day in a state bordering between anxiety, exultation, incredulity and sheer excitement. Fear alternated with hope. If the thing actually worked, were on the level—it couldn't be, of course, but suppose it were; there was a fortune in it, millions. At five thousand it would be dirt cheap. He must have dreamed it—no, he hadn't though; that fellow had described him as if he'd been sitting next to him. He *must* have got something. What if some of those other dam' sharks heard of it, Goldmann, say, or the Castellon gang! Hell, what had the fellow dashed off like that for.

His night was restless and troubled, and he had little refreshing sleep, but in spite of that he was early at his office the next morning and astonished his clerk by saying he was not to be disturbed until he called. At his desk, he fidgeted, watched the clock, attempted to work and cursed nervously.

Promptly at eleven-thirty, however, his vigil was rewarded. As he swooped upon the telephone, something told him that this was the bird he was after.

"Good morning," said a cool, familiar voice in his ear, "I see you are looking well this morning, Mr. Voronezh. You will forgive me if I mention that I rather like the cream-and-blue motif in your tie" (Marcus made a choking sound in his throat.) "However, we must not waste time in pleasantries, for I know you are a busy man and I, too, have my little affairs; I had half arranged to see Messrs. Castellon Brothers this afternoon, over the little novelty I mentioned to you yesterday, but I could not really make it definite until I had had a chat with you. Well, are you at all interested in the proposals? My terms are quite definite and simple; to wit—the sum of five thousand pounds in cash on condition that I hand over to you in your office, plans and a working model of the Phonovisor."

"Let me advise you to keep away from the Castellons, young man," yapped Marcus, "You understand, I have nothing against them personally except that I wouldn't trust them with a baby's money-box. And as for paying five thousand pounds for this invention of yours, well that is a ridiculously large sum. The thing certainly interests me, and I might be able to offer you somewhere in the neighbourhood of ten or eleven hundred if I'm satisfied; but even then it's a big risk, for no one can tell whether the public will take to it. There will have to be a company formed, which will take a lot of money; production and advertising will take more. I tell you, I could easily be ruined over this crazy project. I've more than half a mind not to touch it."

"Just as you please, Mr. Voronezh," replied De Palos, calmly; "In that case I will have to say good morning, as I have much business on hand——"

"I said only half a mind," interposed Marcus hastily. "Look here, I'm certainly interested, and I think you'll find I can help you a lot. Bring your plans and the model round to my office and we'll discuss matters more fully. Perhaps I might even make it up to fifteen hundred if the invention seems really good."

"Five thousand, please," answered the cool voice. "I will call on you with the goods at two p.m. precisely. I am a busy man and you will be wasting neither my time nor your own if you have the five thousand ready, in cash. Au revoir."

Mr. Voronezh swore naughtily at the 'phone. This De Palos had a confoundedly annoying habit of making his own arrangements and ringing off at the crucial moments. He did not like people who were independent and made their own terms and stuck to them. It was a pity someone with a little more pliability had not invented the Phonovisor.

Nevertheless, Mr. Voronezh paid a visit to the very discreet and respectable bank with which he did business, and on his return placed a comfortable wad of notes in the strong little wall safe behind the water-colour of pines at Cap Tarifa.

At one forty-five he was back at his maple-wood desk, and thirteen minutes later his clerk ushered in Mr. Anthony Charles de Palos. Marcus noted that he carried under one arm a long black box, of roughly the same shape as a small filing drawer, while the other hand held a worn leather brief case.

De Palos himself might have stood for a physical representation of his voice; young, lean, dark imperturbable, with a certain impassive hardness about the eyes and the corners of his mouth that spoke for no elementary knowledge of the ways of the world.

The preliminaries over, De Palos extracted a bulky sheaf of drawings and manuscript from the brief case and laid them on the desk. They were technical in the extreme, but as Voronezh glanced through them with an eye long accustomed to patents he saw they represented some form of wiring system and lay-out for high-speed scanning, though the exact details were new and alien to him.

(*please turn over*)

With the click the tiny screen glowed into life, and Mr. Voronezh's eyes again experienced a slight rotundity as he gaped at a perfectly good close-up of a most charming face

De Palos pointed out certain parts of the apparatus and went into an explanation in technical jargon which was mostly Greek to Mr. Voronezh. "You understand," the young man said, "that it would be foolish for me to explain the basic secret of the process until you have come to a decision, but the whole formulæ and specifications are here in full. Then there is, of course, the full-scale working model of the Phonovisor, which is as good as the plans. You will allow me to demonstrate it to you?"

"Go ahead," said Marcus.

The inventor placed the long, box-like affair on the desk and unrolled from one end two short lengths of copper lead. Scraping a little of the flex from the telephone wires, he clipped these leads securely to them. "A crude method of attachment," he said, with a smile, "but, of course, in future every telephone will be equipped with a simple Phonovisor plug-in connection."

At the end of the box facing Mr. Voronezh was a small screen, some six inches by six, while the upper surface of the case carried merely a switch and a tuning dial. De Palos snapped the switch; the screen glowed dimly white and a faint, musical hum emanated from the instrument.

"Now if you will allow me to use your telephone and call up a friend, we will see to what uses the Phonovisor can be put." He handed the extension ear-piece to Marcus, and deftly his slim fingers twirled the dial; May 3202, the watching financier noted.

There came the familiar burr-burr from the 'phone, and after a moment, a click as the receiver was lifted and a girl's voice said "Hallo?" With the click the tiny screen glowed into life, and Mr. Voronezh's eyes again experienced a slight rotundity as he gaped at a perfectly good close-up of a charming face.

"Hello, Pat," said De Palos. "I hope you won't mind doing a small favour for me; I'm demonstrating my Phonovisor to a gentleman here who's interested, and if you could do one or two small things for us, as visual proof so to speak, I'd be frightfully obliged."

The face dimpled and smiled enchantingly. "Why, sure, Tony. Fire away. Thank heaven I tidied my hair before answering, if I'm under observation."

"Vain creature! Well for a start would you mind holding a copy of to-day's paper up to the 'phone?"

The girl disappeared momentarily, and the two men had a view of a small but smartly furnished sitting-room, a flat by appearance.

The young lady appeared again in the field of view, holding a copy of *The Times*, folded so as to bring the date clearly visible; it was Tuesday, the 24th of the month, 193—, the same date as that which stood revealed on Marcus' neat desk calendar. De Palos let him take a generous look at it.

"O.K., dear. Now if you could take the 'phone over to the clock, please . . .?"

There was a brief blurring and the scene in the small screen leaped and swung wildly, then they were looking at a diminutive shelf clock whose hands pointed to 2.15 p.m., coinciding almost exactly with those on Mr. Voronezh's wall clock. Again De Palos allowed him to digest the significance.

"Right-ho Pat. And now a glimpse out of your window, if you don't mind."

Again the view of the room did a tango sway, and then Mr. Voronezh's eyes looked down upon a busy street which he knew by sight. Cars passed and re-passed, pedestrians dodged across the road, all in exquisite miniature. It was better than television.

"That will do, I think, Pat. Many thanks for your help; I'll be seeing you later, I expect."

Once again dimpled features gazed out from the screen. "Glad to have been of service, Tony. Say good-bye to your friend for me. Cheerio." With a last smile to which Mr. Voronezh most ungallantly gave no response, the girl vanished and the screen went blank. De Palos touched a switch and the faint humming died into silence.

One thought stood out clear in Marcus' mind like a bright flame; this young man must not be allowed to go out of the room without parting with the Phonovisor, no matter what the cost. He realised as clearly as anything he had ever done that the key to a fortune of the Ford and Rockefeller magnitude lay on his desk. Vague, entrancing visions of himself as Sir Marcus Voronezh, head of a world-wide combine, wielding the power of a modern Napoleon of finance, floated in his mind.

With a magnificent effort he produced his business poker-face, and spoke in a non-committal tone. "Well, Mr. de Palos, you have a useful toy there, but I'm afraid it is little more. Look here, I'll give you fif . . . teen . . . hundred . . . pounds, cash, on the spot, for it; that is a large sum of money and far more than I ought really to offer. But I like your idea and I'm willing to take a big risk on the chance that I can make some small profit on it."

With a sigh, De Palos shuffled the plans together and began inserting them in the brief case. "A pity. And Mr. Anton Castellon actually suggested three thousand pounds as his first price this morning. Well, I am sorry . . ."

"Wait a moment," cut in Voronezh, hurriedly. "If that crook, Castellon, offered you three thousand, why hang it! I'll give you the same if it's only to keep you out of his clutches. Three thousand, man, why it's a small fortune!"

"A useful sum, no doubt, but five thousand is my price I am afraid. After all, to anyone who has capital to invest, the invention offers a profit of a hundred times that amount; I have not the capital to exploit it. But I am fully aware that there are many interested parties who would willingly pay the sum, and more, for the Phonovisor."

Mr. Voronezh threw up his hands and silently invoked his ancestors in the face of such obstinacy. "Three thousand, five hundred," he rapped, "and that's my absolute limit. It's idiocy to offer more on a wild gamble."

The inventor hooked up the Phonovisor from the desk and snuggled it in the crook of his arm. "I'm afraid I'll have to be going; honestly, I can't take a pound lower price. We are only wasting time, so I'll have to say good day."

The anguished Marcus grabbed his arm and urged him into a chair. With something approaching a moan he opened the wall-safe and took out the five neatly rubber-banded wads of bank notes which lay there.

At 4.11 precisely, the same afternoon, two things of interest happened simultaneously.

At Croydon the wheels of a big trans-continental air liner left the ground as the ship climbed slowly heavenward and sent her nose for South Africa. And in Tavis Street, West Central 2, Mr. Voronezh hurled a heavy inkstand through the centre of his discreet, frosted-glass office door.

It was a disgraceful show of temper, of course, but perhaps in the circumstances excusable. For the technical expert with whom he had consulted had pointed out that the detailed and intricate Phonovisor plans were exactly those of a very nice television receiver just come on the market and retailing at twenty-five guineas. Also he found he had purchased a few hundred feet of Cine film portraying an undeniably pretty girl, a *Times*, a clock, and a view of Pennystone Road, with projector and button starting arrangement. The whole was undoubtedly ingeniously constructed and co-ordinated, and would have admirably served the purpose of a Christmas present to a juvenile relation, but perhaps five thousand pounds was a little too steep a price to pay. Mr. Voronezh evidently thought so.

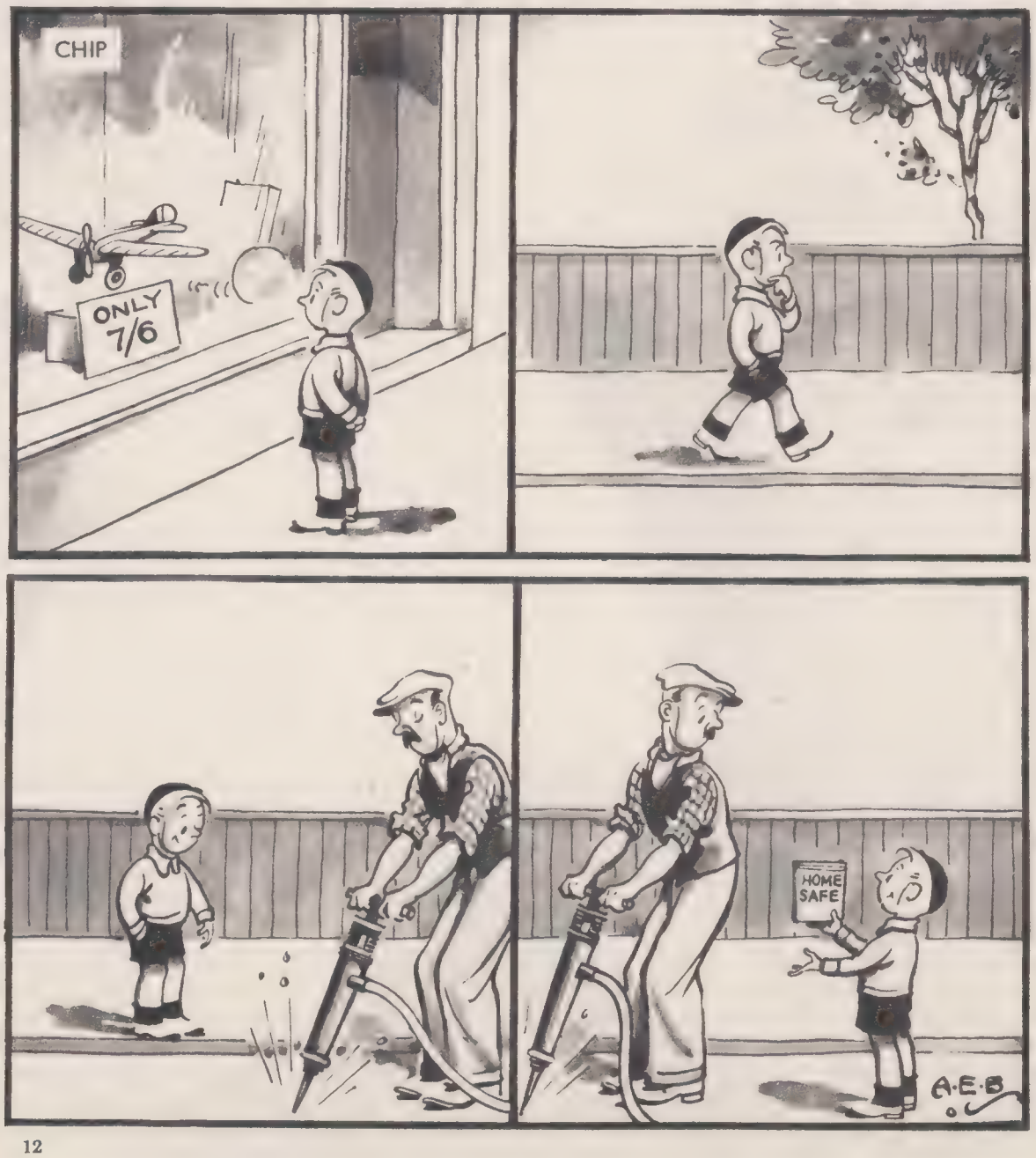
Meanwhile, as the *Carpathia* droned steadily southward above a ceiling of cloud Mr. Anthony Roanne and Mrs. Patricia Roanne settled more comfortably in their seats. Mrs. Roanne was jotting down a few financial items in a small notebook.

"Debit—I think that's the correct word, dear—: to office rental, ten pounds; living expenses—I think fifteen pounds should clear that.

"Let me see—oh yes, to Cine camera and projector, plus details of Phonovisor, twenty pounds; to Johnny, for printing that dummy *Times* sheet, two pounds; extras, five pounds. That makes . . . ten, twenty-five, forty-five, seven, fifty-two. On the credit side we have five thousand pounds, leaving, if I am not mistaken, some £4,948 net profit."

"Clever girl," remarked her husband, and offered her a cigarette.

"But you know," she remarked, as she drew daintily at the tobacco, "I think that the thing which really made dear Marcus bite was the groundbait. It was an ingenious idea to rent the empty office over the way and communicate by telephone, while keeping tab on his reactions with the aid of field-glasses."



THE NEW WILD WEST

The old wild west of Arizona, Texas and Nevada is dead. The former lawless ranches have become holiday camps for "dudes" from the big cities. But in Mexico the man who draws the quickest still lives the longest

BY DAVID WYNN

Left: Some of the party in the surrounding country. Above: Nobody takes any notice of a corpse in the street; an unwritten law in Mexico says that an injured person cannot be moved except by his relatives. Below: A typical gaol where the prisoners have to buy their food

A PARTY of four of us made a hazardous journey from Hollywood to Mexico City in an old car. That 2,300-mile journey cost us £5, by the way.

At San Marcos, a well-developed town south of Mexico City, we found the inhabitants friendly and peaceful. I pushed the tough guys around to get photographs and they took it all with a grin. A few hours later, I learnt that these same fellows had been ring-leaders in the wholesale massacre of eighteen government workers who had gone to San Marcos to teach agriculture, open schools and establish some order!

We moved on to Iguala, searching for thrills. We sat in a wooden *cantina* drinking *tequila*, the raw native liquor, watching two six-footers calmly playing cards. One of them jumped up quickly and slammed his fist on the table. The other drew a knife and hurled it over his opponent's shoulder. The knife quivered in the wall, and the men drew guns. With great presence of mind, the *cantina* keeper brought over tall glasses of *tequila*.

"Gentlemen—wiz my compliments," he said. The next moment, the men were playing cards and drinking as calmly as ever.

The Mexican's temper is easily aroused, yet he soon forgets his grievances, unless there is jealousy over a girl. That night we joined in a love parade in the square. The young men form a circle, while dark-eyed Mexican girls in an outer ring parade round, flaunting their beauty at the men they wish to attract. Gay music floats from the *cantina* balcony. Occasionally someone breaks an egg over your head; confetti tickles your neck. It is a dummy egg—a gag, all right, but enough to make a fellow nervous—there might be a stone in that egg!

The rhythm lilts. A staccato succession of shots suddenly echoes through the square. Women scream. A young man slumps on the floor. His assailant finishes off the job with the long, sharp knife which all Mexican men, and some women, carry. Gaily the music continues and the parade

goes on, while the body lies in a pool of blood. The young victim had dared to marry another man's sweetheart! At a dance the previous night, the rival had asked the married woman to dance and there had been a fight with knives. The rival didn't forget.

As we walked out of a *cantina* the following day, we saw a man shot from behind and stabbed seventeen times. His assailants strolled away. A girl member of our party ran up to the prostrate victim, supporting his head as his life ebbed away. "He's not dead yet," she said, anxiously. "If only we can get him to hospital . . ."

Nobody else took any notice of the dying man. A Mexican strolling by, said: "Get away quickly, senorita. If the relatives find you here, they will kill you."

For three hours, the corpse lay in the sunlight until the relatives claimed it. There is an unwritten rule in Mexico that an injured person cannot be moved except by his relatives. Anyone who takes that responsibility or helps in any way will be blamed for the man's injuries. And they bury bodies without a coroner's inquest. An injured man may be buried alive!

The lonely road from Mexico City to Cuernavaca, sub-tropical resort in the mountains, is menaced by bandits. They place tree-trunks across the road and loot motorists. A band of a hundred robbers roam these mountains, swooping down on villages, pillaging wholesale.

Mrs. Foster, a Canadian woman, was kidnapped and held for £5,000 ransom. She made a great deal of noise in the hide-out and proved such a nuisance the kidnappers were glad to release her for £4, which she paid herself!

At Ometepec, a swarthy, evil-looking man rode up to us. "Greetings, señorita and señors," he said, waving his hat elaborately. "Permit me to escort you through these dangerous villages."

He rode along with us. Quite frankly he told us he was Romero, notorious bandit. People came out of their houses and doffed their hats to him, and we were allowed free passage on our journey. At our destination, Romero again removed his hat chivalrously. "Now, pleez—may I trouble you for all your cartridges and every drop of *tequila*."

It was a polite form of blackmail, but we agreed that we were lucky to get out of a difficult situation so easily.

I was imprisoned in an awful hole as a spy for three days. Soldiers on parade outside my cell would swing their clubs at me to see if they could hit me as I leaned against the bars.

They kept me in a cell with a murderer and a small, diseased child. We were treated like dogs and prisoners had to buy their food; if they had no money, they were left to starve.

An officer with a mean face questioned me. "Come on, tell us who you are," he demanded. "We know you shot three men in Mexico. That's all right. I've shot forty men. I know about you. Escape now. Run for it. The door's open. But I shootee you as you escape—that is the law. You say you are a writer. You no writer. You spy-der and we shoootee spy in Mexico."

Finally, before I was released, I was taken into an office that was bare except for a table and chair and a huge sign: "Alcohol and the church are enemies of the worker." Yet the commander at the desk was roaring drunk!

Revolution brewed as rumours crept round Mexico that the government was to appropriate the oil fields from the English and American companies. One night I was dining with an oil worker in Tampico, an Englishman who had been there for twenty-five years. The telephone bell rang. "Leave immediately," came the order. "Abandon your house. The Mexican government has appropriated the oil-fields. There may be a revolution."

We left the half-finished meal. I helped my host and his wife and children to pack a few belongings and half an hour later they were driving along the road to Mexico City, abandoning their £2,000 home for ever. Soldiers were parading the highways.

An American girl who had been secretary to a leading oil company for a number of years gave me the low-down on the situation. "The Mexican oil workers will now be getting less money," she said. "Government propaganda says that native workers must make temporary sacrifices so that Mexican oil may belong to the Mexican people.

"But there will be trouble. Those workers aren't far-sighted enough to put up with less pay now. Watch out for some bloodshed." She was right. Already bands of oil workers had collected and there were wholesale fights with knives and guns.

"The scheme won't succeed. First of all, those Mexicans haven't the ability to organise and run the oil-fields," she continued. "Apart from that, they have to pay out millions in compensation. And what about possible boycotts? Those powerful oil companies aren't going to take this lying down."

Her prophetic remarks were uncannily accurate. General Cedillo began a premature revolution that was nipped in the bud. The world is now watching the curious situation in Mexico and wondering what will happen next.

A QUESTION OF POLICY

BY A. R. V. NELSON-SMITH

ILLUSTRATED BY J. DEWAR MILLS

SINCE the happy day when his last employer left him the legacy with which he founded his unique firm of Delicate Missions, Limited, Belvedere Tipp had come into contact with an even wider variety of people than he had met during his earlier life as butler to half the noble families of the land. But, until Mr. Martin Marter was ushered into the discreetly furnished inner sanctum, he had never met a representative of the press.

"Pray be seated, sir," urged Belvedere Tipp, eyeing his client with interest, and producing the decanter and syphon which he always kept in the little cupboard under his solid, old-fashioned desk. "You may speak with complete freedom. These four walls, sir—if you will pardon the pleasantry—have not got ears."

Mr. Marter smiled, patiently, and seated himself with a half apologetic air. He was quite unlike any preconceived ideas that Belvedere Tipp may have cherished about journalists. No bulging notebook marred the neat line of his unpretentious, navy blue suit and his breast pocket was innocent of blue pencils. Nor did he keep his hat on. He seemed, in fact, a client after Belvedere Tipp's own heart; middle-aged, cultured and reserved, with a wistful sadness of expression as though his faith in human nature were constantly striving to assert itself in the face of perpetual disillusionment.

"You will have seen from my card, Mr. Tipp," he said, accepting the proffered glass with more politeness than enthusiasm, "that I am editor of *The Muckridge Monitor*. But I must qualify that title by explaining that I am also advertisement manager, business manager, circulation manager and chief—in fact, only—reporter. In short, Mr. Tipp, I *am The Muckridge Monitor*."

"Indeed, sir," purred Belvedere Tipp, "you must lead a busy life. But I take it, sir, that your paper has a limited circulation?"

"Oh, it's going up steadily," said Mr. Marter. "It may be on the small side, numerically, but it covers a wide area. Farmers, chiefly, and county people. You'd be surprised at the influence it wields in its own sphere. I flatter myself that there are many people, not only in Muckridge, but for miles round, who prefer the opinion of the *Monitor* to that of the national dailies."

Belvedere Tipp regarded his client with complete approval. "I, myself," he agreed, "place no reliance upon the views of the more sensational newspapers. But the thoughtful observations of a responsible writer, such as yourself, sir, are quite a different matter. There is one point, sir, that you did not mention. Are you also the proprietor of the *Monitor*?"

Some of Mr. Marter's enthusiasm vanished. "No," he said, shortly, "it belongs to

Belvedere Tipp let him declaim for a few moments. Then, "What about Russia?" he demanded. "'E baint answered Spain yet!" cried somebody

The printing of candidates' speeches in a by-election is dangerous when one owns the paper and the other controls half the advertising; so this editor called in Belvedere Tipp. And was there some heckling?

Mrs. Crabhope. But I'm coming to that later. First, I must explain one or two points, so that you will be able to appreciate the very difficult problem with which I am faced. Now, you may not know it, Mr. Tipp, but the profits of practically every newspaper, big or small, are made, not out of its circulation, but out of its advertising revenue. That, unfortunately, applies to the *Monitor* just as much as to any other paper."

"I have always understood," murmured Belvedere Tipp, "that that was one of the evils of modern journalism."

Mr. Marter shrugged his shoulders. "Well," he said, "it means that you can't afford to offend your advertisers. The big papers have to be pretty careful, but it's not nearly so bad for them. If they lose a few accounts, they can usually replace them; and, in any case, where *they're* concerned, advertisers often can't afford *not* to advertise. But it's different with us."

Belvedere Tipp thoughtfully jingled his massive, gold watch chain, the gift of the third Viscount Turret. "I can quite see, sir," he observed, "that, in the case of a local paper, losing even one important advertiser might be a very serious matter. Do I gather that you, sir, are in danger of——?"

"One moment," begged Mr. Marter. "Please allow me to finish. The *Monitor* has a very good connection. Practically every section of the trade in and around Muckridge advertises in its columns. And in one sense, Mr. Tipp, we are particularly fortunate, for there is no rival paper. But we are not so fortunate in having about half of all the advertising controlled by one man—Mr. Borthwick B. Boomer."

Belvedere Tipp nodded understandingly. "The modern craze for syndication," he observed, distastefully. "And what sort of a man, sir, is this Mr. Boomer?"

"A complete upstart. He came to Muckridge thirty years ago as a builder's labourer. Now he owns half the place. But he still behaves as though he were carrying a hod of bricks." Mr. Marter sighed deeply. "Still," he added, more cheerfully, "I've managed to keep on the right side of him so far. But he's got a finger in most local pies and, as I told you, he's only to say the word and half the *Monitor's* advertising revenue goes west."

"A most difficult position," sympathised Belvedere Tipp. "But you mentioned, sir, that you were faced with a problem."

"Yes," said Mr. Marter, heavily, "I am. And this is how it comes about. The proprietor of the *Monitor*, Mrs. Crabhope, belongs to what I will call the 'county' set. She has no love for Mr. Boomer; in fact, she regards him as the biggest blot on Muckridge. But, naturally, she has never objected to his paying to advertise in her paper. And if old Sewstake hadn't died, she'd still be regarding Boomer simply as something to be sniffed at as she passed."

"Old Sewstake?" prompted Belvedere Tipp.

"Our local M.P. Now we're in the middle of a by-election. And, of course, Mrs. Crabhope suddenly has to develop political ideas and stand as Conservative candidate. The paper's full of her speeches. She insists upon them all going in *verbatim*."

"Most trying," sympathised Belvedere Tipp. "But how, sir, does that affect Mr. Boomer?"

"Boomer," said Mr. Marter, slowly and emphasising each word, "is the Independent candidate opposing Mrs. Crabhope."

"My dear sir!" Belvedere Tipp allowed himself a momentary departure from his usual composure. "Your position is, indeed, a delicate one."

"It's worse than that," said Mr. Marter, bitterly. "Keeping a balance between the two of them would be bad enough, but I could manage it. But that wouldn't suit Mrs. Crabhope. Oh, no! Not only must I print all her speeches in full, but she won't allow me to print a single word of Boomer's!"

Belvedere Tipp thoughtfully stroked the few remaining hairs on his slightly egg-shaped head. There was that gleam in his eye which came only when his professional interest was thoroughly awakened. "Pray proceed, sir," he murmured.

"That's about all," said Mr. Marter, with an 'isn't that enough?' air, "Boomer was pretty decent about it at first. You see, he thought he could do Mrs. Crabhope a lot of harm by telling everybody that we wouldn't report his speeches. But a large part of the electorate consists of farmers and farm labourers scattered for miles around Muckridge. Most of them only come in on market day and they rely on the *Monitor* for all their local news. And Boomer found that canvassing wasn't getting him very far; your Muckridge man likes to see both sides of a question in black and white so that he can chew it over and over for weeks."

Belvedere Tipp pressed the tips of his fingers judicially together. "And Mr. Boomer, I take it, has now delivered an—er—ultimatum?"

"More or less," agreed Mr. Marter, "the election is on Friday. The *Monitor* comes out on Friday morning. On Thursday evening both Mrs. Crabhope and Boomer are holding big eve-of-the-poll meetings. I've got to put Mrs. Crabhope's in in full. And Boomer says that if I don't report his, *verbatim*, as well, he'll. . . ."

"Take away all his advertising," finished Belvedere Tipp, with the air of a man who has all the facts neatly marshalled.

"More than that," said Mr. Marter, in strained tones. "He threatened to start a rival paper of his own. *And* he's capable of doing it!"

Belvedere Tipp shifted his portly, black-coated and striped-trousered figure into an attitude of greater expectancy. "And what is Mrs. Crabhope's reaction?" he inquired.

"Awful!" groaned Mr. Marter. "She has no real interest in the paper at all. I've argued with her until I was dizzy. All she says is that she pays me to make the paper show a profit and, if the revenue drops, that's *my* funeral." He turned a gloomy gaze upon the founder of Delicate Missions, Limited. "And it will be, too," he prophesied. "If I don't report his meeting and Boomer takes away his advertising, I shall get the sack. If I do report his meeting, I shall get the sack just the same. Mr. Tipp, I rely upon you to show me a way out!"

Belvedere Tipp paced up and down the room with sober dignity, conscious of the anxious eyes of Mr. Marter following his every step. At last he halted by his client's chair. "Your case interests me, sir," he said, "I will accept it. I have already evolved a plan. But I shall require your co-operation."

"I'll do anything," promised Mr. Marter, eagerly. As he listened to Belvedere Tipp's school-masterly exposition of his plan, the editor of *The Muckridge Monitor* experienced the relief of an anxious patient in a doctor's consulting-room who learns that, after all, he still has the rest of a normal lifetime before him. "Mr. Tipp!" he exclaimed, "I congratulate you! Your plan is perfect! If only we can pull it off. . . ."

"If you will do your part, sir," Belvedere Tipp assured him. "You may rely upon me to do mine. Then I shall see you on Thursday, as arranged? Excellent! Good day to *you*, sir!"

Almost before the outer office door had closed behind a lighter-hearted Mr. Marter, Belvedere Tipp's icily efficient and spinsterly secretary, Miss Firkin, entered with The Ledger, an enormous brass-bound tome in which the head of Delicate Missions Limited entered every detail of all his cases. And she was ready with her notebook before her chief had time to ask her to produce it.

"Please take a careful note of your instructions," said Belvedere Tipp, "as you have important work to do in this case."

Except for a tightening of her thin lips and an occasional vicious jab of her pencil, Miss Firkin displayed little emotion as she took her chief's rapid dictation. But when he had finished, she showed no enthusiasm for her task. "I need hardly tell you, Mr. Tipp," she said, "that I shall, as I always do, carry out your instructions to the letter and without demur. But I should like you to know that I do not consider this to be a task quite in keeping with my position."

"Nobody will know who you are," Belvedere Tipp assured her. "And I shall be there in case there should be any trouble." He regarded his secretary closely. "I will also arrange for an appropriate bonus," he added.

Miss Firkin's nose tilted an inch or two higher, but, as usual, her chief won the day. "Very well, Mr. Tipp," she said, frigidly, "will there be anything else? Or shall I have your lunch sent in now?"

"You may have a couple of veal-and-ham pies sent in, Miss Firkin, and some pickles and—and——"

"A nice apple, Mr. Tipp?"

"A nice apple, Miss Firkin."

And while Belvedere Tipp was checking up final details over his frugal lunch, Mr. Marter was speeding back to Muckridge, eager to get busy with the not too easy part that he had to play towards his own salvation. The more he thought about it, the stronger seemed the possibility of something going wrong; so, without first going back to his office, in case he should find some excuse for not leaving it again, he made his way straight to Mr. Boomer's imposing mansion on the hill.

Mr. Boomer received him, after a suitable delay, in his "Tudor" drawing-room, which he had furnished from memory after a visit to Hampton Court. He greeted Mr. Marter as Napoleon might have greeted a rebellious but potentially useful subaltern on the eve of Waterloo. "Well?" he grunted, aggressively, thrusting forward a series of affluent chins, "come to your senses?"

Mr. Marter quietly found himself a chair, looking considerably more confident than he felt. He never saw Mr. Boomer without thinking of Billy Bennett's classic phrase: "Almost a gentleman;" and he always needed a moment or two in which to steel himself against the first jarring effects. "I have spoken to Mrs. Crabhope," he said, in his own good time, "and I regret to say that she still refuses absolutely to allow me to report your meeting in the *Monitor*."

Mr. Boomer ominously propelled his sixteen stone of expensively, but just too tightly clothed person in the direction of his visitor. His underlip stuck out and there was a nasty glint in his beady little eyes. "You know the consequences!" he snarled.

"I am well accustomed to facing facts," said Mr. Marter, with quiet dignity.

"Right!" rapped Mr. Boomer, "well, you've made your own bed and I hope you'll like sleeping in it!"

"One moment!" Mr. Marter took a very tight grip on himself indeed and thought hard of Belvedere Tipp's reassuring confidence in his plan. "It does not necessarily follow, Mr. Boomer, that because Mrs. Crabhope does not wish me to report your meeting, I shall not do so!"

Mr. Boomer looked as though he had just been promised a substantial but unauthorised refund of income tax. "I'm not sure what you're getting at," he said, "but it sounds like talking."

Mr. Marter began to feel a little easier. "There are times," he observed, warming to his task, "when an editor must take a stand for his principles; and this is one of them. I can no longer countenance this wilful supression of news, Mr. Boomer. So I have decided to report your meeting in spite of my proprietor's instructions to the contrary."

"Principles, eh?" sneered Mr. Boomer. "Well, that's one way of wrapping it up. I suppose that's how you'll explain it to Mrs. Crabhope?"

Mr. Marter looked pained. "When the excitement of the election is over," he said, "I have no doubt that Mrs. Crabhope will appreciate the difficult position in which I was placed. Meanwhile, Mr. Boomer, you will realise how important it is that Mrs. Crabhope should learn nothing about my decision."

Mr. Boomer selected himself a six-inch cigar and puffed a cloud of smoke in the editor's direction. "Yes," he said, significantly, "I see that. I'll keep it under my hat. Are you coming, yourself?"

"Good gracious, no!" cried Mr. Marter. "I shall have to report Mrs. Crabhope in person. She *insists* upon my being at her meeting. And I'm taking young Gules along with me so that he can practise his shorthand."

"Then who are you sending?" demanded Mr. Boomer. "I can't let you have my speech in advance. I never prepare my speeches."

"I've arranged for all that," Mr. Marter informed him, slightly nettled at any suggestion of outside interference with the details of editorial procedure.

(*please turn to page* 17)

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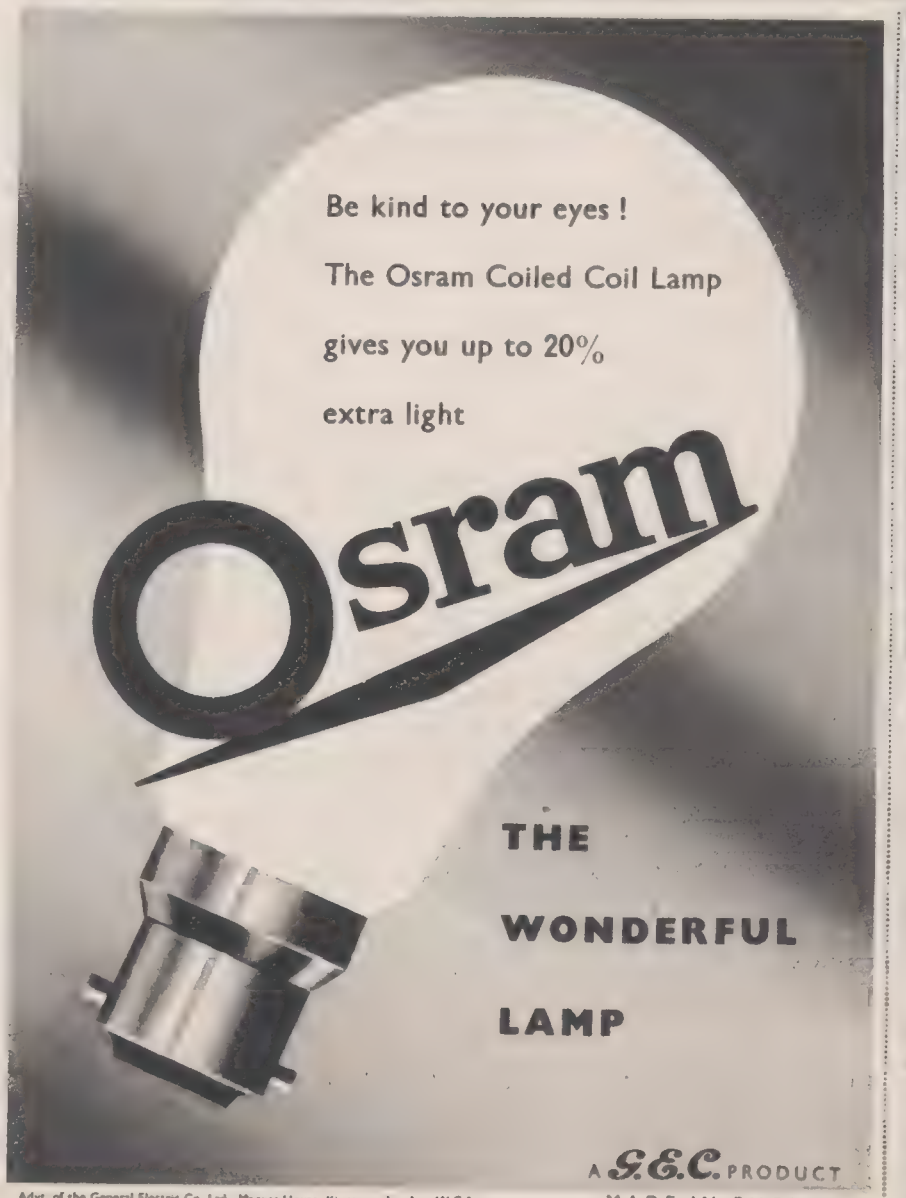

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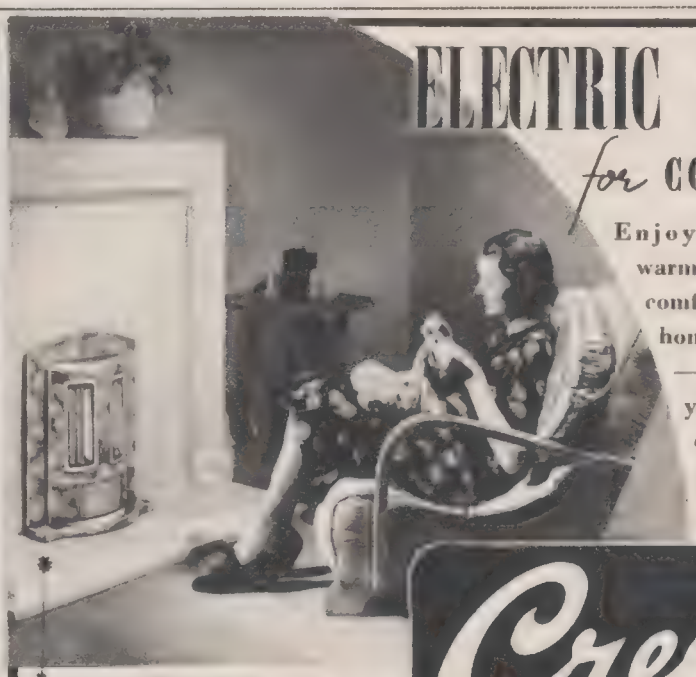

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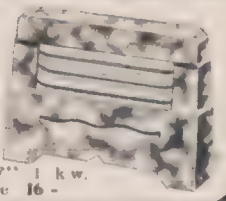

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PSI

"I have engaged a very experienced shorthand writer to take a *verbatim* of the entire meeting. A Miss Firkin. But it would help me considerably, Mr. Boomer, in any editorial comment I may make, if you would briefly outline to me the main points of your policy."

Mr. Boomer's podgy thumbs flew to the armholes of his waistcoat, his tubby legs straddled apart and, instantly, the massive drawing-room was filled with his most strident platform voice. Mr. Marter listened attentively, carefully picking out, with the skill born of long practice, the salient points from the mass of Boomer verbiage. When, at last, he managed to escape back to his office, the echo of Mr. Boomer's voice was still roaring in his ears as he settled down to write out, in accordance with Belvedere Tipp's instructions, the main points of Mr. Boomer's policy.

Thursday found him still trying to catch up with the arrears of work caused by his activities of the day before. And the effects of half an hour's strenuous listening to Mrs. Crabhope on the telephone were still apparent when Belvedere Tipp was ushered in, accompanied by Miss Firkin.

But, at the sight of Belvedere Tipp, Mr. Marter's cares seemed to slide off his over-burdened shoulders. With an almost jaunty air, he handed over his summary of Mr. Boomer's policy, grinned with the bashfulness of a prizewinning schoolboy when Belvedere Tipp complimented him upon the way he had carried out his part of the plan, and earned Miss Firkin's undying gratitude by accidentally addressing her as "Mrs. Tipp."

When he was engaged upon a case, however, Belvedere Tipp believed in wasting no time, and he certainly had a busy day ahead of him. So, cutting Mr. Marter's pleasantries short in his suavest manner: "And how, sir, are things going, generally?" he inquired. "Is Mrs. Crabhope still expected to win?"

"Oh, she'll win," said Mr. Marter, without hesitation. "My life won't be worth living if she doesn't," he added, gloomily.

"And you would say, sir, that Mr. Boomer, although he has his supporters, is not, on the whole, a popular man?"

"You wait till you see him?" counselled Mr. Marter. "There's many a man in Muckridge who'd like to watch him bite the dust."

"Excellent!" purred Belvedere Tipp, consulting the handsome gold hunter presented to him by the late Baron Revere, and picking up his hat: "Then, if you are ready, sir, we will proceed to the hostelry you mentioned." He turned to Miss Firkin. "I shall not require you until this evening, Miss Firkin. Please be outside the market hall at seven o'clock. There are, I understand, many objects of historic interest in the town which you may care to inspect in the meantime." And, as Miss Firkin hesitated: "You may charge your lunch to petty cash," he added.

The little town, as they threaded their way through its narrow, cobbled streets, full of unexpected twists and buildings that were young when disputes were settled by means of bow and arrow, presented a spectacle that would have lured less conscientious men than Belvedere Tipp from the stern path of duty. But Mr. Marter, who had written so much about the place that he thought of its historic features in terms of special numbers of the *Monitor*, showed no sign of pausing until they reached the selected "hostelry," which rejoiced in the name of "The Cow and Bull-frog," and was remarkable chiefly for the amount of sand on the floor of the bar and the density of its smoke-laden atmosphere.

In spite of the fact that he had substituted a soft hat for his customary sober bowler, Belvedere Tipp was aware that he looked a trifle out of place among the market-day farming throng jostling in the bar. But, by the time Mr. Marter had spotted the objects of his search, the founder of Delicate Missions, Limited, was beginning to feel more acclimatised.

"There they are!" whispered Mr. Marter, pointing to a group of particularly tough-looking farm hands clustered around a table in the far corner and showing their combined raucous appreciation of an apparently unending joke of obscure origin. "Bill Howdrake's bunch! They hate Boomer like poison! They're the lads you want! Now, I'll leave you to it. If they see me with you, they might suspect something."

Nevertheless, Mr. Marter, from a concealed spot near the door, decided to watch developments. If he expected any free entertainment, he had reckoned without Belvedere Tipp's undoubted gift of adapting himself to any company. After a few moments' suspicious silence, the farm hands, with refilled tankards before them, apparently decided at any rate to give Belvedere Tipp a hearing. Another refill and they were hanging on his words. Presently, by the sudden resumption of stertorous guffawing, Mr. Marter judged that Belvedere Tipp had reached the crux of his proposition and that its reception was favourable, an assumption that was confirmed a moment later by the sight of the head of Delicate Missions, Limited, cautiously distributing pound notes.

Mr. Marter heaved a sigh of relief and prepared to accompany Belvedere Tipp back to his hotel. But Belvedere Tipp, who never left anything to chance, seemed to consider it advisable to go all over the ground again. Mr. Marter propped himself against the doorpost and waited. He waited a long time; until, in fact, the cry of "Time, gentlemen, please," rose above even the babel in the "Cow and Bull-frog" bar.

It may have been Mr. Marter's imagination, but it seemed to him that Belvedere Tipp, when at last he made his way to the door, seemed a shade less dignified; almost ready, indeed, if the occasion warranted it, to be hearty. At all events, he was clearly well satisfied with his efforts.

But to all Mr. Marter's suggestions for entertainment during the afternoon he returned a polite but firm refusal. "I found the atmosphere in there rather overpowering," he said. "If you will allow, sir, I would prefer to rest. Also, sir, I must make a careful study of the summary of Mr. Boomer's policy which you were good enough to prepare for me."

"Then I shan't see you until after the meetings?" said Mr. Marter, doubtfully. "Is there anything you'd like me to do . . .?"

"You may leave the matter entirely in my hands," Belvedere Tipp assured him. "If you will wait in your office, I will call afterwards. Good day to *you* sir!"

Whatever effects he may have felt after his crowded hour at "The Cow and Bull-frog," Belvedere Tipp was completely his own suave and dignified self when he met Miss Firkin outside the market hall.

Miss Firkin had already got busy on her own account. "I have seen Mr. Boomer," she said. "When I told him that I was reporting the meeting for the *Monitor*, he arranged for me to have a special seat right by the platform."

Belvedere Tipp beamed his approval. "Then I should occupy it straight away," he advised. And, as Miss Firkin made her way, notebook in hand, to the side door, Belvedere Tipp went sedately in by the main entrance and selected himself a suitable position at the back of the hall.

The hall was already half full. The audience was clearly in merry mood. Muckridge needed little excuse for celebrating. Market day, alone, usually provided sufficient opportunity. But the incidence of a by-election as well almost laid a duty upon the inhabitants to eschew strict sobriety. In the church hall, at the other end of the town, a rather more staid audience was assembling to listen to Mrs. Crabhope, for she had the unquestioned support of all the wealthy landowners for miles around. But Muckridge in the raw was flocking to Boomer's show.

Belvedere Tipp looked anxiously around for his farm hands. He had no fear about their ultimate arrival in view of his promise of further balm for itching palms. But Mr. Boomer was on the point of mounting the platform before they trooped in. They were clearly ready for business, however, and, further largesse distributed, it was only a matter of moments before they had safely dispersed to different parts of the hall.

Meanwhile, somebody was introducing Mr. Boomer. Then Mr. Boomer held up his hand for silence. Eventually, he got it. And for five minutes Mr. Boomer's voice alternately rasped and roared its message to the electors of Muckridge.

Belvedere Tipp let him go on until he seemed to be getting a real hold of his audience. Then, after a sonorous clearing of his throat, the founder of Delicate Missions, Limited, took a deep breath, stood on tip-toe and shouted: "What about Spain?"

Mr. Boomer broke off in mid-sentence as though a brick had hit him, searched in vain for a squashing retort and made the fatal mistake of arguing with a heckler. Belvedere Tipp let him declaim for a few moments. Then: "What about Russia?" he demanded.

The crowd began to titter. "'E bain't answered Spain yet!" cried somebody. Immediately, the cry was taken up all round the hall.

"I want to know about Russia!" persisted Belvedere Tipp, sensing the atmosphere to a nicety.

"Never moind Roosia!" bawled an obviously belligerent member of the audience. "Wot abowt Japan?"

Mr. Boomer was growing redder and redder. The veins in his neck stuck out as he tried to make himself heard. But every time he opened his mouth, a volley of questions was fired at him. Before long he was dancing about on the platform, shouting at the top of his voice and shaking his fist in impotent fury.

The audience rocked in their seats. Belvedere Tipp regarded the scene with growing satisfaction, occasionally interjecting a question when it seemed necessary to keep the ball rolling, and waiting for the right moment to apply the *coup de grâce*. It came sooner than he expected. In the middle of a particularly riotous period, Mr. Boomer, apparently realising that discretion was the better part of valour, suddenly, with a final frenzied shaking of his fists, made to leave the platform.

But before he could escape, Belvedere Tipp had acted. "What price Boomer?" he cried, in ringing tones.

At this pre-arranged cue, the first of the farm hands sprang up in his seat and, letting out a wild whoop of triumph, caught Mr. Boomer smack in the eye with a large, over-ripe tomato. The others were but a fraction of a second behind him and, if their choice of vegetable were different, their aim was equally good. In an instant the hall was in chaos. And, while Mr. Boomer, dripping every known variety of fruit and vegetable, not to mention rotten eggs, was running the gauntlet in a vain attempt to escape, Belvedere Tipp slipped out of the hall and made his way round to the side entrance to rescue Miss Firkin.

It was late that evening when he arrived at the offices of the *Monitor*, but the light was still burning in Mr. Marter's room.

The editor received him ecstatically. "It worked!" he cried. "Boomer left here half an hour ago. He was in a towering rage to begin with. Ordered me to say nothing about what had happened. 'Print one word,' he said, 'And I'll not only cut out my advertising, but I'll start my own paper and smash your rotten rag to bits!'" Mr. Marter smiled, happily. "But I played him up," he grinned. "Got some of my own back. Told him I'd written up the whole story. 'Muckridge Candidate Pelted Off Platform,' and all the rest of it. Couldn't possibly suppress news, I told him. In the end, he was eating out of my hand. I've got him just where I want him now!"

Belvedere Tipp carefully stowed Mr. Marter's cheque for his fee away in his pocket-book. "I would like to say, sir," he observed, warmly shaking the editor's hand, "that seldom have I had a case that has given me greater satisfaction. I wish you a very good night, sir!"

Apart from noting that Mrs. Crabhope won the by-election by a large majority, Belvedere Tipp's interest in Mr. Marter was crowded out by the exceptional pressure of other cases. But, some time later, a question by the persistent Miss Firkin about one of the historic buildings she had visited in Muckridge, prompted him to telephone the editor.

A strange voice answered the editorial telephone. "Mr. Marter? He's not here now. Are you a friend of his?"

"Dear me," murmured Belevedere Tipp, with real concern. "I trust that nothing is amiss?"

"Well . . . as a matter of fact——" The voice was lowered, confidentially, "Mr. Boomer kicked him out when he bought over the paper."

"Phew! Mr. Hartman, is it always as difficult as this to get an interview with you?"

Laugh

The "PASSING SHOW

"It's not so monotonous as some jobs, sir."

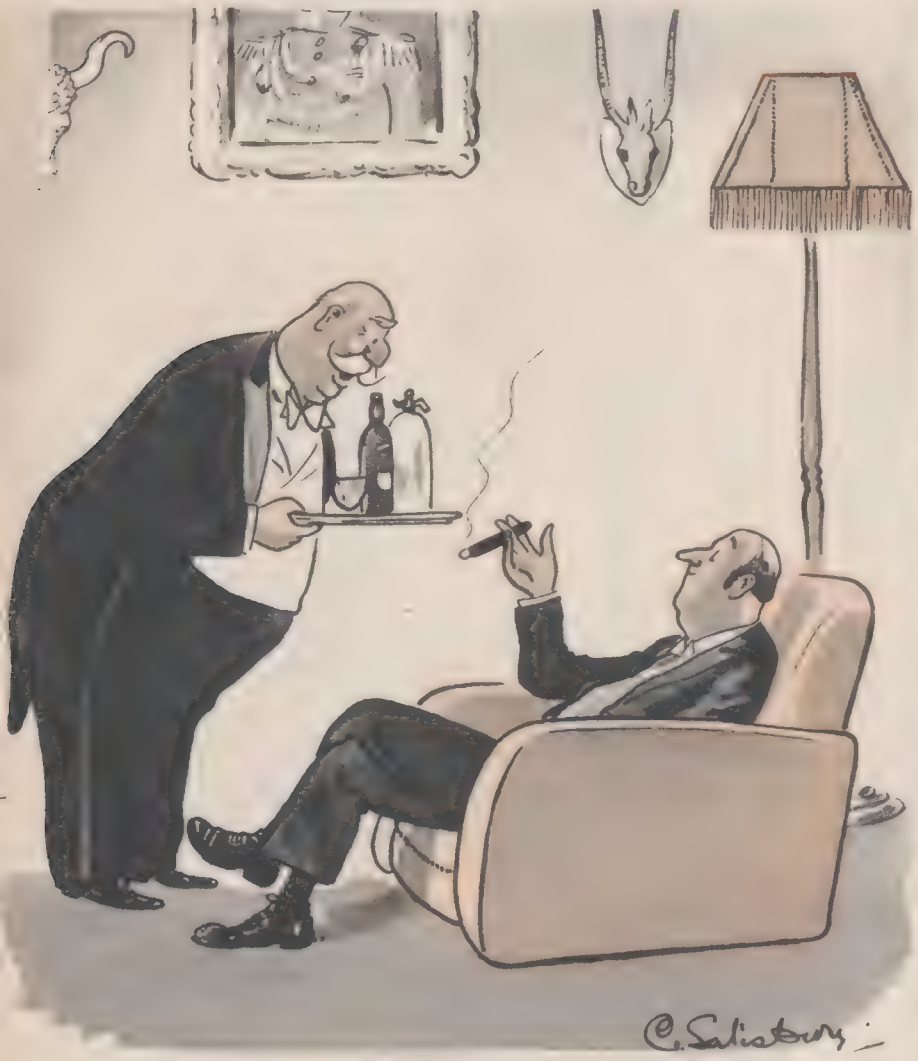
"I always leave it open, officer—I don't want burglars climbing up my rose vine."

"He's frightened of his secretary, so he's firing her !"

"Keep the pot boiling, boys !"

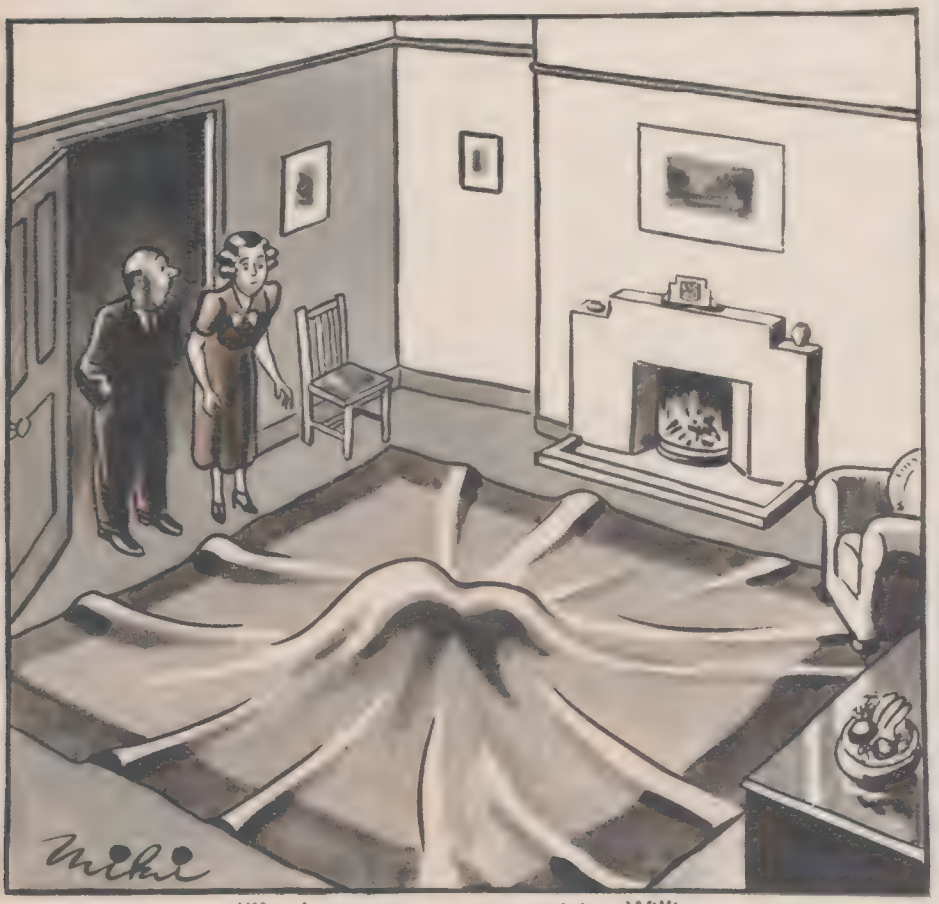
lkter

v" Smile Section



"May I congratulate you on getting four aways up on Saturday, Jenkins?"

"Look out, dear, that knife thrower has started his pruning again!"



"I'm beginning to regret giving Willie a luminous wrist watch for his birthday!"

"Well, I think you might have been on the look-out yourself, Colonel. After all, you are chairman of the local A.R.P."

A MAN FLAGGED

By A. C. BARRETT

WAS HE SUCCESSFUL?

CAMEO STORY
By A. W. Robertson

"IT'S certainly a coincidence meeting you in a place like this. Why, it must be thirty years since we last met," said Philip Duke.

"Yes, it is exactly thirty-two years since we were both at school together. As a matter of fact, I'd practically forgotten about you, but now we're face to face it all comes back to me," replied Ernest West.

"And to think of it, you were the ambitious one in those days. You were the one who was going to make the world stop and take notice of you. Yet, here you are still in the service, working in some damned dull and out of the way place. And what is more, all you're likely to get for it all is about eight hundred a year."

"You're right, Philip, it's eight hundred and a pension."

"How you've changed. You were the one who said, that pensions made a man stay 'put' when he should be moving from one job to a better one. And now you speak as though you were looking forward to the pension."

"As a matter of fact, you're perfectly right. I am. You see, in a job like mine I have to deal with a damned rotten crowd and I'll be glad to retire. Also, the routine is getting me down."

"I'm surprised," said Philip, "that the routine hasn't killed you. Doing the same damn work every day of the year. How you've stuck it so long is the big mystery to me. I've made and lost three fortunes in that time. Lived in London, Paris, the Riveria, New York and Florida, while you've been forced to live in this God-forsaken-spot with its foul British climate.

"Look at the travelling I have done. When I travel, I travel in style and if you do any travelling, you certainly need to travel cheap on your eight hundred. It must have been some job maintaining a position like you have to and bringing up your rather big family on that pay."

"Yes, it has been," said Ernest, "but I'm rather proud of my family and they all show signs of doing very well."

"Now look at me," continued Philip. "There's nothing my wife or family could not have. Price was never an object to me. And they've had a swell time with me. Why, I've literally showered money on them.

"But that's just one of the many things which you have missed. Have you ever broken the bank at Monte Carlo? Or tipped a waiter ten pounds? And seen the startled expression of his face? No, and what is more, you're never likely to.

"Look at my coups in the city. Have you ever staked a million on the market and seen yourself pull it off? No, and again you'll never have that feeling. You don't know what the feeling is like to have a million at stake. A million to one gamble, and finally pull it off.

"That's what I call luck. Look at me in Tattersall's Ring; when I put on my big bets the bookies would look pale, for they knew they were dealing with 'Lucky Duke,' the man who always backed winners.

"Look at the way I used to practically bankrupt the 'bookies' and when everything was nearly gone, I would give them the money back to start up again.

Ernest West realised that he had just better let Philip Duke get his superiority off his chest

They're the kind of friends who'll help me when I need it.

"And what is more, there are plenty of people whom I've helped who'll help me. While you, in a job like this, couldn't raise a thousand pounds if you wanted. Why, to try and do that you might even lose your job."

Ernest West realised that he had just better let Philip Duke get his superiority off his chest. He didn't really mind it, if it made Duke feel better, and it was interesting to note how the years had affected Duke. After all, the very least he could do for his old school pal was to listen.

Philip continued with his talk, "look at my land speculations, when everyone was selling shares during the slump, I bought and look what I cleared out of that."

West looked at his watch and said: "Yes, Philip, I agree you certainly have had a good run, but don't overlook the fact that you still have a ten year prison sentence to serve.

"While I am only the governor of this prison, with, as you say, eight hundred a year!"

LAUGH WITH THE WORLD

"Don't look round, Archibald. Those awful people who are staying at our hotel are sitting just behind us."
Schweizer Illustrierte. Zurich

Smith minor had to learn French.

Smith minor: "Why should I learn French?"

Tutor: "Half the world speaks French."

Smith minor: "Well, isn't that enough?"
Koprive, Zagreb.

The maid had just answered the front door bell.

Maid: "It was two ladies, but I said that you were not at home."

Mistress: "And what did they say?"

Maid: "One said to the other, 'Friday is not such an unlucky day after all.'"
Lustige Blaetter, Berlin.

Counsel: "What did the accused say to you?"

Witness: "He said that he had stolen the car."

Counsel: "Yes, but did he not speak in the third person?"

Witness: "No, there was no third person present."

Counsel: "Now, understand me. I mean, did he say: 'I have stolen the car?"

Witness: "No, sir, you never came into the argument."
Berlingske Tidende, Copenhagen.

MR. CRISPIN PASSES BY

SHORT SHORT STORY
Complete on this page
of a bachelor's downfall

BY
W. A. SWEENEY

ILLUSTRATED BY BERTRAM PRANCE

"Young blackguard!" Mr. Crispin would jerk out

OLD bachelors may be divided, for practical purposes, into two categories, placid old bachelors, born to be uncles, whom children regard as their natural providers, and old bachelors who seem to have rabies. Mr. Crispin was of the latter variety. It cannot be said that he was ever actually seen to bite anybody, but there were children in his neighbourhood who whispered hints, darkly and fearfully, as he passed them frowning heavily at the pavement.

Nevertheless, a thing of horror waited on him every time he approached his dwelling. Despite himself he looked for it, deliberately raised his eyes to the window of the flat above his and there it was, always. The Thing was a boy's face distorted in a grimace that suggested to Mr. Crispin strange demons of some kind of a foreign hell, specially for tropical savages. The boy's hair stood wildly on end and from the wide-open mouth in the middle of the grimace the boy's tongue protruded to an incredible length.

"Young blackguard!" Mr. Crispin would jerk out, dark in the face with indignation.

"Yah!" the boy would retort, waggling his hands behind his ears in a manner calculated to heighten the general infernal effect.

Before Mr. Crispin passed in, he could see the two younger children, females, ten and six (like bed and breakfast) holding their middles with helpless laughter at the unvarying success of their elder brother Thomas. They considered Thomas an artist who stood head and shoulders out of the ordinary run.

For the fifteen years Mr. Crispin had occupied his flat, with his faithful attendant Jarl, the flat above him had been tenanted by a bed-ridden old lady as noiseless as a statue. About the only noise she ever occasioned was when they came to carry her away to a still more silent dwelling-place. And then the Bustlow family moved in. They were hardly in before Mr. Crispin felt like a desert-dweller suddenly transported to Chicago.

"What have we got billeted above us?" grunted Jarl, as they both stood looking up at the ceiling as if they expected it to come down at any moment. "The 131st Jallalaballah Horse, or what?"

"Or the Hell's Fire Blazers," rejoined Mr. Crispin, controlling his fury with a great effort. "It can't be anything else. WILL YOU STOP THAT ROW?"

This last, stern exhortation was intended to be a deafening bellow, but pent-up rage had partially paralysed Mr. Crispin's larynx and he only succeeded in whispering ridiculously, which seemed to have the effect of driving all the blood in his body to his face.

"Is it going to be like this always?" he croaked, after an interval.

It was going to be like that always. If Mr. Crispin had had any experience of families he would have known that from the outset, and would have packed up. The children danced and jumped frienziedly, drumming furiously on the ceiling, so long untouched by young life, and the shrill and rumbling grumblings of the respective parents and the musical accompaniment of the wireless began to have the same effect on Mr. Crispin as enforced residence in the middle of a village fair.

When he came home one afternoon, however, to find that the elaborately mounted photograph of himself in cricket kit (with the side-whiskers of forty years before) had crashed to the floor, with the nail that had supported it wrenched from the wall by the seismic tremors caused by the family upstairs, he decided on an ultimatum.

"Choose," he finished up, to the proprietress of the flats, who occupied the ground floor, "between a tenant who has paid regularly and given no trouble to anybody for fifteen years, and that troupe of dancing dervishes above me, that's all I have to say."

"I know how you feel, Mr. Crispin," agreed the proprietress, with nervous alacrity. "I should think you wouldn't stay and I wouldn't expect you. Don't I know what they're like. But they're going. I've already given them notice. Those children. That boy Thomas, if you want *my* opinion, has the makings of a young gangster——"

"Or gargoyle," muttered Crispin, interrupting her.

"—and believe me they would have been out before now if it were not for the fact that——" Here the proprietress hesitated a moment and lowered her voice. "Anyway they are due out on the 15th and out they'll go."

One night some time after this there was an unwonted quietness above and a certain unusual noise of coming and going and Jarl came in with the information that the doctor was with Mrs. Bustlow. Mr. Crispin, buried in a book, merely grunted. And then, suddenly, he put down his book and listened, for a little cry had reached his ears. It stopped and then broke out again. Jarl came in and said: "It's a boy."

"A boy," repeated Mr. Crispin, vaguely.

"They'll soon be out o' the place now," said Jarl. "They're going to a flat across the way. I'm told, number 28. Good riddance."

They went on the 15th as ordained. Mr. Crispin watched them from the window.

The man who succeeded the Bustlows made little more noise than the bed-ridden old lady. The quiet, indeed, that followed the departure of the Bustlows was something like the almost audible silence of a suddenly deserted children's playground. Crispin realised it with a startled grunt.

"We'll have some peace now," he muttered, but he looked up at Jarl as he came in noiselessly in his slippers, as if something discontented him and he knew not what. A few nights after this he said to Jarl:

"'Twas always at eight o'clock they used to put on that wireless, wasn't it?"

"Eight every night, 'cept on Saturdays, when it was on all afternoon."

"Hah! A man can have a little tranquillity to read now, at least," grunted Mr. Crispin and began to read his book, but after a while, he seemed to tire of it and called on his servant.

"Get my coat Jarl, I'm going out."

As Mr. Crispin went out of the front door he glanced across at number 28. Yes, there was young Thomas at the window. He could have passed along on his own side of the street but he crossed and when he was half-way across young Thomas made a face as Mr. Crispin expected, but the face he made lacked the old-time strength in execution, the tongue he stuck out was no longer the lolloping

"Yah!" the boy would retort

insult of former days but a tongue shortened and weakened by an unaccustomed hesitation.

"Young blackguard!" muttered Mr. Crispin, ritualistically but his ejaculation, too, was half-hearted as if he too felt there was some mysterious change in the relationship existing between him and young Thomas, entitling them to insult each other. He took to going out after dinner in the summer evenings and it was rarely young Thomas was not at the window to deliver his performance. Then, for a week, there was no sign of young Thomas.

"Jarl," said Mr. Crispin, one morning, after walking up and down the floor, "you might make some discreet inquiries and find out if that young ruffian Bustlow, across the way, is ill."

Jarl reported later, "Ain't he that's ill; it is his brother, the little 'un got diphtheria."

"He's—he's terribly small to have that trouble, isn't he, Jarl?"

"They gets it when they're small," grunted the knowledgeable Jarl.

Then one morning he saw Mrs. Bustlow at the window letting a very pale convalescent baby see the sun. The same evening Mr. Crispin went for his evening walk. Yes, young Thomas was there—how that boy liked sitting at windows! But, although he must have seen Mr. Crispin, he made no face. Mr. Crispin was surprised. Hadn't he seen him? He stopped in the middle of the street and pretended to look for something, to give young Thomas a sure opportunity of seeing him and then looked up fiercely. No—no face. He said: "Young blackguard!" and went on his way with a sense of missing something.

A week later the proprietress of the flats was standing in Mr. Crispin's sitting-room.

"It's beyond me, Mr. Crispin," she was saying. "Completely beyond me. I'm beginning to wonder if you haven't gone—well, after fifteen years living here . . ." She stopped. "I've done everything to meet your wishes. The tenant above you is a model of tranquillity—I have made inquiries—and cannot possibly disturb you."

"He disturbs me horribly. Getting up, eating and going to bed. If he doesn't do anything else but that in life why does he continue to eat and go to bed?"

"Good heavens! He's got to eat and go to bed!" The proprietress stared at Mr. Crispin in a kind of alarm.

"You haven't got to listen to his *noiselessness*," he said, gazing mysteriously out of the window.

The woman gaped. Crispin was worse than she had thought. . . .

"After sending away the Bustlows for your sake and—well, it's this way, Mr. Crispin. I don't deny your right to leave your flat even after fifteen years, and take a flat elsewhere—but to take a flat across the street! And do you know who your neighbours will be above you over there? Do you know?"

"Perfectly. The Bustlow family," retorted Mr. Crispin, calmly. At that moment he spotted young Thomas taking his place at the window. Young Thomas spotted him, too, and his features immediately twisted up into a hideous mask.

"Young blackguard!" said Mr. Crispin.

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THE DEVIL COMES ABOARD

BY DOUGLAS NEWTON

ILLUSTRATED BY
A. C. MICHAEL

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY

SAVARAN, that lean, eagle-eyed adventurer, the Whip of Kings and the Fear of Rogues, has come to Kjweli, disguised as a beggar, to settle an old account with the magistrate,

KADI JIBLIS EL SIFR, merchant in money, intrigue, arms, slaves, drugs and such assorted dirt. He nears the magistrate's house just in time to rescue from a mob of natives

MIRIAM PASTON, a beautiful, courageous English girl who is with her brother,

TERRY PASTON, young, public school and very innocent of the way of rogues, and their friend and fellow-traveller,

CAPTAIN EUAN AMORY. The three of them are in Kjweli to fit out an expedition to the hinterland. Savaran pursues one of the natives to recover Miriam's stolen bag and finds in it a map revealing the route of the expedition. He makes his way back to El Sifr's house to restore the bag, but the magistrate is prepared and has him arrested and flung in gaol. Learning that the girl and her companions are sailing the next morning, Savaran escapes and boards the ship. He lays in hiding until, during a storm, the crew revolt and then he comes to the rescue, El Sifr and the ship's captain escaping with full details of the proposed journey. Savaran now takes entire charge of the expedition and safely beaches the boat. The local settlement of the fierce Ibi-Iberi tribe are subdued, the lorries and equipment unloaded from the boat and the expedition gets under way. Savaran, knowing that this village will communicate his plans to the others leads them into believing that he will take the western road to the Great Sand, sends the expedition along the eastern road, he himself branching to the west to skirmish with them, arranging to meet Amory on the edge of the Great Sand.

SAVARAN got through. He was waiting at a water-hole on the edge of the Great Sand when the lorry party reached the rendezvous.

Thanks to his strategy, their journey had been swift and almost free from danger. As his keen brain had foreseen, his ruse had drawn all the fighting men of the Ibi-Iberi to mass on the Western road, leaving only a few old men and boys in the villages.

A few harmlessly flung spears and pot-shots from antique guns were all they experienced as they flashed by such villages as they could not avoid. Their speed always saved them, and their speed was due to Miriam Paston, for whom they could not travel fast enough.

Even Euan protested at this on the third day, saying: "If we drive on at this pace we run the risk of being short of petrol for the exploration of the Great Sand."

"Does it matter?" the girl cried. "The real point now is to get to our rendezvous quickly."

"What's biting you, sis?" Terry demanded. "You don't usually get the jumps, and anyhow we're out of danger."

"Is Savaran?" she frowned. "They may have followed him to that water-hole and, if he's attacked there, we can save him."

"Savaran—I pity the poor attackers," Terry grinned, then blinked at what he saw in his sister's face. "I say—is it only just keenness to meet our ragglety-taggle Napoleon again?"

"Don't be a ridiculous child," she cried, with surprising heat, and turned away quickly to hide the high colour of her face.

On the fifth day, following Savaran's directions, they arrived at a land of steadily growing sandhills, picked up the Bamikano-Yirate road and followed it to the water-hole. Under its stunted palms stood Savaran's lorry and tents.

The lorry showed distinct bullet marks and other signs of war and hard going, yet it, the tents, the very order of the camp, had a spit and polish neatness that made the cavalryman in Euan Amory open his eyes. They noted, also, that the gipsy adventurer had lost at least one man from his crew and that two were wounded. Even Savaran had a bandage round his head, but true to self he managed to make even that add to the rakish and extravagant glory of his get up.

For it was a new Savaran they saw. He had shed his rags and become resplendent. From his shoulders there flowed the gold-braided magnificence of an Arab chieftain's snowy white cloak. As he moved, it fluttered aside to reveal the perfection of shining top-boots and a suit of tropical khaki that fitted his raking and sinewy figure with the distinction only possible to the most exclusive tailors. The braid on his arm indicated Field-Marshal rank. With his high and dominant air, he looked all he boasted, a master soldier, a conqueror.

Before all that dazzle, they could only gape awed, though the woman in Miriam showed a human anxiety about his wound.

"Just a memento," he said, with his large gusto. "I gave them more to keep me in mind. They will show a proper respect when I return."

He led them to a tent where a meal worthy of a city banquet was set out on a table extemporised from packing-cases. Terry cried out at the bottles of wine.

"I equipped myself fully from the ship before leaving," the lean rogue laughed. "It is only fitting that we should celebrate

The strong nerve of Miriam Paston broke for the first time and she found herself crouching in Savaran's arms

the beginning of our quest in style. . . . Kabanga, fill the glasses. We'll drink to the Great Sand."

He raised his own in a magnificent gesture, and Captain Euan Amory, who had been dumb before his glitter, saw the uniform fully for the first time.

"That uniform," he spluttered, "if it wasn't for the fit, and those bands——"

"Both my work," Savaran said, with superb indifference. "That jackal, El Sifr, was over fond of gold braid, and as you will gather from this cloak, that was his. Also I am, among other things, a genius in tailoring——"

"Then—damn you, that's *my* best uniform!" Euan Amory stormed. "You must have stolen it from my kit-box on the ship."

"Where else?" the unabashed smile flashed. "Why bother about trifles as long as Savaran is suitably clothed for the adventure before him and the company he keeps?"

Euan Amory flared in fury, but Terry began to laugh uncontrollably and Miriam Paston, instead of showing disgust said, unaccountably:

"Why be so petty, Euan, in the face of what we have gone through and what we have before us? And—and remember all Mr. Savaran has done for us—and will yet do."

Captain Euan Amory stared astonished at this attitude in the woman he had hoped to marry. This cold and fastidious girl had actually surrendered to this mountebank. He relapsed into sulks the more bitter since Savaran did not notice them. Savaran, supreme with women as in war, took it as a matter of course. He drew the unresisting girl down to a seat beside him and said genially:

"Yes, O pearl of looks and brains, nothing matters except our enterprise. It is time for a real discussion of plans."

"So that is the outline as far as we gave it to the Kadi el Sifr," Miriam said, finishing her explanation. "That is, we are searching for this hidden city of Myssr, lost for centuries in the Great Sand, using as our basis the map and other particulars handed down to us by our great-grandfather—but, of course, there was more behind it than we could tell El Sifr."

"On whom be death on a dunghill," Savaran said, with pious venom. "But I doubt whether he was so easily misled. I, naturally, never was."

"I suppose we're terribly innocent," she smiled. "Well, you're right. It's gold. A strange and tremendous amount of gold."

"There's nothing strange about gold, or the things men do with it, or for it," the gipsy man shrugged.

"Oddly, that is the basis of the whole strange business. As our great-grandfather learnt the story it was the things men did for this gold, the fear of worse things, that was responsible for this great hoard. It appears that this city of Myssr came into existence because of gold found on its site. In those days, centuries ago, the desert there was flatter, greener, easier, if you can believe that"

"Easily. All deserts, from the Sahara to the Sudan, have been encroaching steadily south through the ages," Savaran said. "More, all have left behind little pockets of ancient civilization, cut off and marooned, as it were, by the sand. The lost city of Zerzura, for instance, that men have sought since Musa Ibu Nasr, the astrologer, wrote of it in A.D. 700. Then there's Kufra, which was rediscovered not so long ago, and 'Uweinat and scores of places. Have no fear of my disbelieving you. I, who know Africa better than any man, know that anything is possible in her unmapped wastes."

"Well, this city of Myssr, which rose to wealth because of its gold mines, must have become degenerate and luxury-loving through its riches, for when the sand began to overrun the neighbourhood and it grew more difficult for caravans to reach it, there arose holy men and prophets who proclaimed that this invasion of the sand was a punishment for the sins their traffic in gold had caused to the world and themselves. These seers urged them to have nothing more to do with gold; more, to cast it out of sight as a thing accursed. And because the sand was then overwhelming them with a terrible rapidity—'coming with great winds,' as my great-grandfather's statement puts it—the people at last listened to their priests. The day came when the whole population of Myssr went in great ceremony to one of their vast, underground water-tanks and, as one person, flung into its depths every jewel and every particle of gold they possessed."

"But even *that* did not stay the curse," Savaran said, in a cynical flash. "There would be at least one woman to withhold her geegaws."

"Why, yes," Miriam said, startled at his insight. "There was one, the queen. She was a defiant and head-strong creature who absolutely refused to cast away her trinkets, and so the great winds blew more strongly, the sand rushed on them in waves and the city was cut off from all human contacts for ever."

"With that mass of gold still drowned in the underground tank?"

"Naturally, it was too evil to touch. It is there to this day. My great grandfather hadn't a doubt about it."

"And how did he learn all this?"

"One of the inhabitants of Myssr managed, by a miracle, to get through the Great Sand a hundred years ago."

"So there are still living inhabitants?" Savaran cried, with shining eyes.

"Apparently a city full of them, though they are dwindling," the girl told him. "It would seem that by some strange formation of the land, the city and quite a large area of cultivation were not, in fact, could not be overwhelmed, I can't understand that myself, yet my great-grandfather believed it."

"Why not? The deserts are full of oases, you know," Savaran said. "But how did this man get away and how is it others have not?"

"It wasn't a man, it was a girl," Miriam said. "Her story was that many have tried, especially men, but being without even camels the attempts have always proved hopeless. She only succeeded because she was more desperate—and lucky—than others. It appears that every year there is a ceremony in which the sin of their evil queen is expiated. This rite takes the form of casting another woman, a virgin, alive into the tank where the gold lies."

"Drowning her amid gold," Savaran said.

"Probably, though my grandfather wrote of it that she was cast into the water as a sacrifice to the Demon of the Gold. Well, this woman who escaped was the virgin chosen for her year, but she was in love with a man, and to avoid her fate both planned a flight across the sandhills. It was actually the man's sacrifice—he gave her all the water he carried for himself—that enabled her to get through, for he succumbed when a little more than half-way. She herself was near death when she was found, and actually died a few days later from her privations. But before she did she told her story to the chief of the Arab band who found her, and he happened to be a warm friend of my great-grandfather—and that is how the story was handed down to us."

"But the Arabs themselves might have gone after the gold," Savaran suggested.

"We think not. The chief told my

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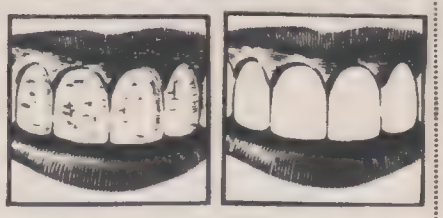

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grandfather that he thought the gold accursed and that the very nature of the Great Sand, which he held to be impassable, was proof of this. For that reason he had never told the story to another Arab. My great-grandfather, being an infidel, was in a different category; also the chief was sure that he was even less likely than Arabs to reach the city. The two attempts my grandfather made seemed to prove him right, for the manuscript ends with the assertion that the thing is hopeless, even with the best camel caravan. It still is, that way, I fancy, but on the other hand we feel that this modern method of desert exploration gives us a real chance. What do you think, Mr. Savaran?"

"A much better chance even than you knew—for also you have Savaran with you," he said, largely. "I think you will see Myssr within a week." He made a long arm for a portfolio, Terry's portfolio, extracted a sheet of paper and a pencil. "Let us get the map on to paper again and work out our distances," he said.

At once his pencil was reproducing their map with an accuracy that made them gasp, though Euan Amory did more. With a warning glance at Miriam he said, stiffly: "Yes, you've got it marvellously," and then choked as the girl cried:

"That map is false. We drew it inaccurately to mislead the Kadi El Sifr. Show Mr. Savaran the real map, Euan."

Savaran took the old, stained bit of paper the soldier reluctantly produced and examined it, his face twisting drily.

"The wisdom of Captain Amory is only equalled by the candour of a queen among women. . . . Yes, this does explain the riddle."

"Riddle?" Euan Amory scowled.

"Yes. Though your map sets the city marked X beautifully wrong, your mileage figures place it beyond the Great Sand and in the millet garden of Sidi Muley Bu Riesh, a desert hermit and friend of my own. I have been wondering how I managed to overlook it on my last visit."

"You knew the map was a fake?" Terry gaped.

"There is little in Africa Savaran does not know," he said, thoroughly enjoying the astonishment he had caused. "I knew, even, that you would explain in time."

"And do you know if my great grandfather's map is to be relied on?" Miriam asked.

"Enough for Savaran to lead you into the Great Sand at dawn," he said.

At dawn they left, but not until after a clash between Euan Amory and Savaran due to the fact that the lean adventurer took immediate and high-handed control from the moment of their reunion. He reorganised their caravan, cutting down their guard to two men per lorry because of the necessity of travelling light and conserving their water supplies. With his usual acumen he picked out the most reliable of the seamen, for all those he weeded out actually preferred to follow the well-defined caravan route to Bamikano rather than run further risks, once Savaran had demonstrated that they could reach the town by easy marching in a few days.

This left them with—including the chief engineer and extra driver—but twelve armed men besides themselves, and the soldier in Euan Amory felt this meant too much risk if, as it might happen, they had to face a city full of inhabitants, possibly hostile.

"They've no doubt died to a mere handful by now," Terry said, "and anyhow they're antiques. We've modern arms——"

"And Savaran," the bizarre adventurer put in. "Strong nations have surrendered to less. Twelve will be enough. I have said it."

By midday they were deep in the Great Sand.

It was a toilsome, bewildering and but for the presence of Savaran, a terrifying experience. The Great Sand was a vast and lifeless desert, unlike anything they had ever seen. It was not flat sand, but made up of an endless succession of ridges soaring high over their heads to heights rarely less than thirty and more often than not a hundred metres high. It was like some titanic sea caught and petrified at its height by some stupendous calamity of nature.

The dunes were in straight, continuous ridges of the type the Arabs call *Seif* (swords), with deep gulleys in between. Sometimes these gulleys were also floored with sand, sometimes with shaly stones.

Their route to the mysterious city lay obliquely across these dunes, but they used the firmer-surfaced gulleys, mostly, choosing those that led roughly in the right direction and following them until the towering crests sank low, or, as sometimes happened, showed a break in the right direction, when they either put their lorries to climb the hill, or drove through the break into the next gulley.

It was like driving through a maze. The high dunes were the hedges cutting off all view save the sky above. Sometimes, too, the gulleys ended, as the pathways of mazes do, in the blind wall of a *cul-de-sac*. When they reached such points they had to rush their lorries at the slope, too.

Always this was a moment of breathless excitement, and they would hang, clinging to their seats, sometimes at a dangerous tilt, wondering whether the lorry would reach the crest, the engine stall under the strain, the wheels sink into the sand—or the machine turn right over. More often than not it rose swooping and curvetting like a bird and they would sweep on to the crest with a thrilling bump and straighten out, as all eyes scanned the horizon for the first sign of the hidden city.

In such a desert and in such air they were sure they could see it, however far away. But they never saw it—only dunes. Only that appalling sea of ridges stretching away and away in all directions, only endless sand-hills, sun-dazzling, white and eternal. There was no variation in the stupendous monotony. No sign of trees or even a blade of living green, no sign of man or man's passing. Only sand, sand, sand stretching in pitiless surges until their own heat-shimmer blurred them into the distance.

And day after day it was the same, until the harsh, hot and endless loneliness became a nightmare and they began to ask themselves in secret fear if, in spite of travelling by compass, they weren't simply doubling and redoubling on themselves, as they might easily do, by running along gulleys adjacent to ones already used, and so going round and round in an endless circle, as one did in other mazes.

Travelling along the gulleys, too, was like travelling perpetually through an oven, so powerfully did the high sand walls concentrate the heat. But it was not only the heat and the endless monotony that exhausted and bewildered the mind; the sand-hills themselves were cruelly exacting.

The dunes played them strange tricks. Their sand was so fine and loose that a breath of wind could send it up like smoke and though, as the pioneer motor explorers had found, their half-deflated tyres carried them over what seemed a loose surface almost magically, even then the sand could be impish. Let something disturb the surface, even the vibration of a footfall, and the packed grains seemed to collapse and their wheels would sink to the hubs.

There were also patches of more fluid grains, which, quite undetectable from the general mass, gave under their wheels like a sort of dry quicksand. In both cases it meant hard digging under a blazing sun, with the use of specially made channels and rope-mesh runs under the wheels to get them clear. Too often, too, it meant running repairs due to the strain, or toilsome replacements from the spares they carried.

Savaran, in his uncanny way, developed an instinct for sensing rather than seeing these quicksands, but even then there was much digging, shoving and repairing to be done in the blazing heat, so that each night of their adventure found them more exhausted and nerve-frayed.

With fatigue and exhaustion grew fear. The utter emptiness of this dead and sinister sea in which nothing, not even a bird, moved but themselves, was increased by the appalling silences of night.

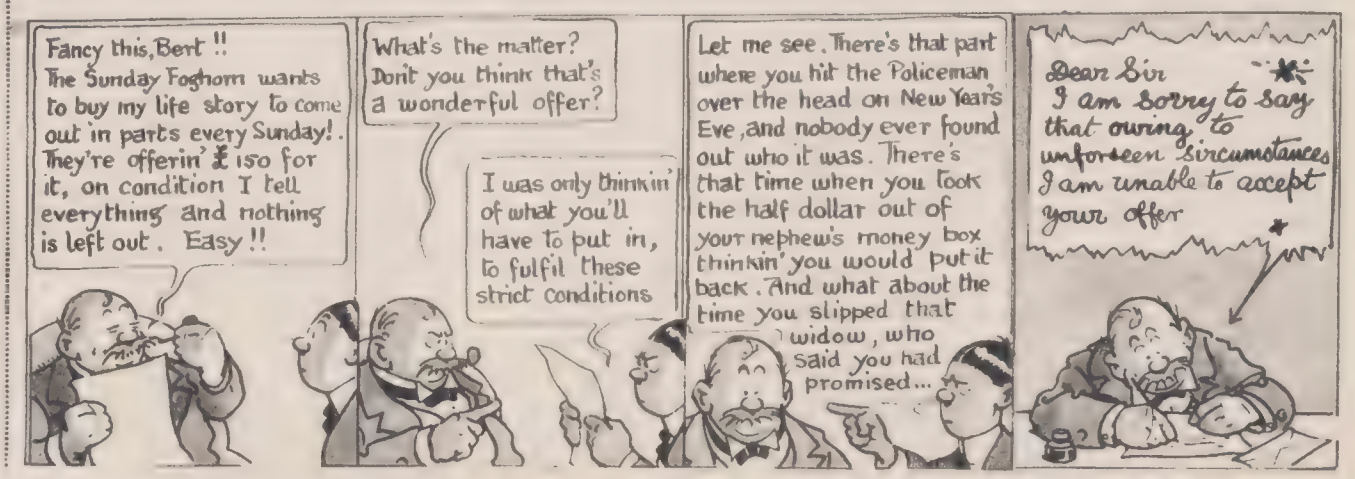
Once the noises of their own movements, of their own activities about the camp died, there rushed in a quietude so vast and voiceless that it seemed beyond human endurance. No tomb was ever so soundless. It seemed as though some giant instrument had sucked even the whisper of air from the world. The voices of the seamen would try to fight against its dark and dominant eerieness with a pretence of cheerfulness as they ate their supper; but it mastered them, and their singing and chatter sank to uneasy whispers until even whispers seemed to accentuate the quiet too horribly.

Yet it was not a dead and unbroken silence—it could give tongue to moments of sheer horror. On their first night, just after the stillness had stricken them dumb, there came like a blow out of the blackness a cry so awful, so appalling, that all leapt to their feet grabbing their weapons. But that was all. One short and diabolical scream loosed in the distance then the silence again, but now quickened with an expectant terror.

At odd intervals during the night they heard this frightful, this nerve-destroying cry, now close, now infinitely far away, and each time it brought them to their feet, even from sleep, drenched with the sweat of fear. What it was no man knew.

On the fourth night, however, the scream nearly stampeded them—it gave tongue in their very camp. It rent the silence with an outcry so diabolical, so close, so frightening, that even Euan Amory gave a shout of alarm as he sprang to his feet, while the strong nerve of Miriam Paston broke for the first time and she found herself crouching in Savaran's arms.

OLD BILL and BERT — By BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER



For a moment all stood aghast while the sinewy arms held her tight. Then Savaran chuckled, bent and kissed the girl full on the mouth and called through the quivering silence.

"Turn lights on to that big dune to the left."

They manipulated the headlights until the great hill was stark with brightness. Putting Miriam aside, the limby adventurer walked dramatically across to the dune, thrust a long arm up to his shoulder into it and withdrew it with violence. At once all the surface sand of the hill began to move downward and as it moved there came again the eerie and terrible outcry —only now they saw it was the sand speaking.

"By gosh, who'd have thought it could make such a hullaballoo," Terry shouted, but he tried it with his own arms and found the sound repeated.

"I remember reading about it now," Euan Amory said, when the sheepish laughter died down. "But you—you knew all the time, Savaran, yet you let us fear."

"We are now too deep in the Great Sand for the men to dare going back alone," Savaran said, indifferently.

"Was that the only reason?" the soldier asked, sourly. "Or couldn't you resist the chance of posing as a miracle worker?"

"That, too," agreed the unabashed fellow. "The master-mind always foresees his opportunities—and makes the most of them when they arrive."

His quizzing eyes looked straight into Miriam's, but now she met them with eyes as bright and laughed softly. She, at least, appreciated the way he made the most of his opportunities.

Yet a few days later even she began to wonder if his leadership was the marvel he considered it.

They were still running hopelessly between the scorching walls of sand, still charging to the top of dunes only to see more hills stretching away and away without break on every side.

All were weary to their very bones and utterly dejected at the absence of any sign of their goal, while the terror of this vast emptiness was growing into a moral torture. Even their over-tired lorries were beginning to rattle and groan with the ominous warnings of breakdown. When, about mid-day, they put them at the highest nearby sand-hill, and the second vehicle gave off a crack and a lurch that betokened broken springs and another sweating replacement in the blazing sun, Euan Amory, dirty, unshaven and more haggard than the rest, broke out violently:

"Damn it, we've reached the limit. I knew from the first that the whole thing was folly, and that map a mare's nest."

"Or merely inaccurate, as such are when drawn only from hearsay," said Savaran, to whom the strain and toil seemed only to have added a dry and fiercer spareness.

"So you said when we reached the point marked X days ago," Euan jeered. "Since then we've been circling and quartering this wilderness, on your fool plan to locate Myssr. Well, where is it?"

"Not a blink of it," Terry growled. "It's plain that some crook played our revered great-grandfather for a sucker."

"You both believed in it readily enough when we planned the expedition," Miriam said, faintly.

"Do *you* still?" Euan demanded harshly.

"Savaran does," the girl murmured and looked for support to the raking figure that had wandered to the edge of the dune and stood staring this way and that over the unending vista of sand-hills.

"Savaran!" the soldier said contemptuously, as the lank figure vanished out of sight down the slope. "He'd believe in anything that took his crazy fancy. But *we've* got to be sensible. We can't risk going on looking for this—this myth any more. We're just about all in ourselves, and the men are ripe for mutiny. And I don't blame them. Half rations, especially of water, and back-breaking work in this heat is more than flesh and blood can stand."

"And there's the petrol," Terry barked in. "It's dangerously low, and there's real danger of our being left helpless in the midst of this. Your gipsy Napoleon's stagey dash round the Ibi-Iberu used up more than we can spare."

"It saved all our lives," the girl protested.

"Did it? Or was it only his usual gallery play," Euan Amory jeered. "Anyhow, that's no reason why we should lose our lives now. I say we must break off this fool hunt at once and head straight north for civilisation. Delay may be fatal. You, as owner, must tell the bounder at once."

"No need," said a mocking voice behind them. "You may consider that ultimatum delivered."

They turned to find the adventurer regarding them derisively, hands on hips.

"And your answer is?" Euan Amory demanded.

"No! The hunt goes on."

Euan Amory's hand flashed to his pistol. Terry drew his and even the men bunched aggressively, fingering their arms. Only Savaran stood unperturbed, his smile deepening as it always did under greatest danger. Yet the very essence of that smile warned them of peril; they paused, glaring, and the scornful fellow said:

"How could perfect little gentlemen shoot the big, bad crook in the presence of a lady? Nay, nay, for blue-blood still holds——"

"Blast you, you bounder, you go too far," Euan Amory burst out in fury.

"And a little farther," the bizarre man said, calmly. "We start up the lorries and head them south-south-west."

"Savaran!" Miriam cried. "Does that mean—you *must* explain!"

"Since loveliness insists," he said, with his inevitable gesture. "Here!"

He thrust out a hand and in the palm of it lay thin green shoots, the first herbage they had seen for days. Then he led them to where he had descended the dune, pointed. They saw what seemed no more than a mist of green tinging the sand. It stretched away south-south-west over the next dune.

"The beginning of growing things," Savaran said. "Follow it and it will lead to cultivation, and where cultivation is . . ."

They did not have to be told. They ran shouting to the lorries. They repaired the damaged springs in record time. Following Savaran's car they swooped down into the green, followed it up the far dune and cheered wildly as they saw it deepening ahead.

All afternoon they toiled and sweated, following that green clue. Twice lorries stuck and had to be dug free in the frying heat. But they did not care. The green had given way to a stunted verdure, even to the heat-twisted stems of dwarf bushes. Night found them in an area where every dune had its patches of growth. True, the sand-hills still went on endlessly, but that verdure meant hope.

Hope—but, perhaps, a wicked hope. All next day they toiled on, finding more and more growing things and telling each other that from the next crest they *must* see the lost city looming up before them. But they never saw it. Only the same frozen ridges stretched ahead and around them, until excitement died, elation sank into exhaustion and despair, and when, in the last hours of the day, it became plain that even the vegetation was thinning, even Miriam's spirit broke.

"We've circled the place," Savaran frowned. "It must be hidden somewhere in the centre."

"Hidden be damned," Terry snapped. "Look for yourself, man! Only dunes as far as the eye can see. No breaks even—nothing!"

"Sand-hills make for deception," Savaran muttered.

"It's no good, Savaran," Miriam put in. "I'm as ready as you to run risks—but we dare not now. We've used up too much petrol in to-day's search. It's actually a gamble getting back to safety on what's left. We can't delay any longer, we must start for civilisation to-morrow; even *you* must see that, Savaran."

They waited, tense, even ready to fight, so desperate were they. Yet even the iron-willed adventurer had reached his limit it seemed.

"Who is Savaran to argue against beauty," he said with a shrug and retired, like Achilles, to his tent.

NEXT WEEK:
The Lost City of Myssr

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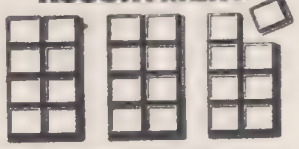

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NO RUBBING

Virginia Hall's Page

THE other day I was talking to a professional woman who has to leave her home in the charge of servants, and she was telling me that no maid has ever left her except to get married. That's a pretty good record, isn't it?

I believe her secret of success is that she treats them like human beings. For instance they have their own piece of garden at the side of the house where, if they wish, they can enjoy their meals out-of-doors, and they are allowed to go out after the dinner things have been cleared away and washed up, and they reciprocate by coming in at reasonable hours.

I have been in her kitchen, which is a happy place with flowers in vases, books and a loudspeaker—to say nothing of being absolutely spick and span, with everything which can possibly be polished gleaming brightly.

I think, too, that a maid respects a mistress who is prepared to do in an emergency what she asks of another in normal times. In these days, kitchens are tending to be well-fitted working places which are often electrically equipped and have every reasonable requisite.

But ponder on the kitchen-making requisites. Is the sink suitable? Do its draining boards slope satisfactorily? Is there a drier for towels, a plate rack and a sink basket? Is there a good supply of various kinds of soaps, flakes and other cleansers essential for various purposes? Is the kitchen free from flies and mice? Can good housework be done with the least outlay of energy and with the least amount of dirt in its train?

I wonder if the day will come when there will be trained, uniformed women, earning reasonable salaries in return for efficient service. And I wonder who will be the pioneer of domestic arts, as Florence Nightingale was of nursing, for domestic work is just as important as nursing, since a healthy home is the greatest safeguard against sickness.

Efficiency counts in the kitchen as much as in any other walk of life, but the human element also counts. Life would perhaps be easier if relations between employer and servant could always be strictly business-like and impersonal. But human nature rarely allows this, especially in the home, although a well-equipped, labour-saving kitchen and a little consideration, help to bring happiness and contentment to a house.

★ Quite often I spend my week-end with friends on their cabin cruiser. Some week-ends ago when I was taking my turn in the galley (which really means the opening of tins) I had a particularly difficult tin which I just could not open, so I asked one of the men to deal with it for me. He took it and the tin-opener outside, placed the tin on the edge of the boat and set to work—whereupon the tin skidded and the opener went overboard. Now a boat without a tin-opener means tragedy and we were only saved from starvation by putting in at Wootten Creek in the Isle of Wight and buying a new opener at the village shop-of-all-sorts.

But this is not going to happen to me again for I have bought and presented to the owner of the boat a fool-proof tin-opener which can be attached to the wall ("wall" doesn't sound very nautical) of the galley. It holds the cans firmly, opens round, square and oval tins, flips up the lid, smooths down the edges and in fact does everything except turn out and eat the contents!

This tin-opener is a splendid affair, for there is no fear of cut, lacerated fingers. There is no more dangerous hacking and stabbing to get a start to open a can, for you simply put the tin in the machine, pull down a lever, give the crank a few easy turns and off comes the lid, clean as a whistle.

Your hands are never near the can while it is being opened and the edges are pressed down so tightly inside that you couldn't possibly cut yourself. Food pours out more easily, too, and nothing is wasted.

If you would like to have one of these modern type tin-openers and require further particulars, write to me, marking your envelope "Tin" and I will tell you more.

★ When I am offered mixed pickles I always try to pick out the cauliflower, for I like that best. But I imagine that other people prefer it, too, for it always seems to disappear first. So I will tell you how to make it.

Cut the hearts of the cauliflowers into small sprigs. Leave them, covered with brine, in a basin for twenty-four hours and then drain thoroughly. In case you're not quite sure what brine is, it is usually made in the proportions of ½ lb. salt to 2 quarts of water. Put the salt and water into a pan, bring to the boil, and skim and strain through muslin before using.

Now make some spiced vinegar, the amount depending on the number of cauliflowers used, but the proportions are : 1 quart vinegar, ½ oz. each of allspice, peppercorns and ginger, 6 cloves, 1 or 2 blades of mace, 2 inches of cinnamon stick, ¼ lb. sugar and a tablespoonful of grated horseradish. Bring all these ingredients to the boil slowly and simmer for 15 minutes. Add the cauliflower sprigs to the spiced vinegar and boil for about 5 minutes. Pack into jars, well cover with the vinegar and seal down.

★ Do you know those round tins which contain paste? You see them on most office desks. I mean the ones which, when the lid is off, look like one cylinder within another, the inner one being the place where the paste brush is kept while the paste itself surrounds it.

Well I've found a new use for these tins when they're empty. They're grand to put inside vases to keep the flowers in place. You will find that flowers such as marigolds simply arrange themselves in one of these old tins. Try it !

★ A friend of mine had the most glorious hair. It was that marvellous, deep auburn colour and it had the makings of a wave in it. But she could never do it properly and so it was completely wasted on her. Where her slight wave wanted to go back she would discourage it by pulling it forward, and if she *could* put a grip in the wrong place she did so. I often told her that she didn't deserve such lovely hair and frequently I set it for her.

Last week she was visiting London and I met her for lunch, after a three years' interval, and what a transformation greeted me ! Her hair was set really well, and I asked her if she'd just come from the hairdresser. But no, she'd found some automatic finger waver which even she, who certainly never had the knack of hair-waving, could use with ease. Since that lunch time I've found out more about it.

It is an oblong piece of featherweight metal with teeth on the two long sides. In the centre there is a sliding piece with teeth going in the opposite direction. All you have to do is to dampen the hair, pull back the centre slide and lay the waver flat on the head where the wave is wanted. Keeping the waver flat, release centre slide which automatically makes the wave. Remove the waver when the hair is dry. It's simplicity itself.

These automatic wavers are 2/- each, so if you are interested, send a crossed postal order for 2/- to me in an envelope marked "Finger Waver" and I will have one sent to you post free.

★ "Five yards of brown chiffon velvet have been given to me and I want your advice as to the best type of evening dress I should make. I am on the big side and the tops of my arms are so definitely fat I cannot wear a full evening dress with a halter neck or even one with shoulder straps."

This is an example of letters I get very often from PASSING SHOW readers. I do my utmost to help them to choose the right styles for their particular figures and requirements but my letters have always started with the words :

"Unfortunately, as we do not run a pattern service I cannot give you a definite style, but I would advise you, etc., etc." This has never completely satisfied me and as more and more letters asking for dress suggestions have been coming in to me just lately, I have agitated for a Pattern Service incorporated with the Virginia Hall Page. I've got my way at last.

In future, I am going to have one style illustrated on this page each week. I am going to be very careful in my choice of this style, having in view the trend of fashion and suitability for difficult figures. I am also going to be mindful of those useful "background" designs which are worth their weight in gold because their appearance can be altered by a change of accessories.

"Simplicity" is the name of these patterns and a good one, for it tells you all about them in just that one word. They are simple; the veriest beginner need have no qualms in tackling dressmaking when using one of these patterns. And they're not expensive; ninepence or one shilling each, which is money well spent when you take into consideration that you are getting the design of a model gown.

So, starting next week, you are going to see a weekly fashion on this page, and in future I shall be able to give you far more definite help when you write asking for dress suggestions.

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in these pages, please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help

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Ruddy . . . . . ☐	Brown . . . . . ☐	BRUNETTE
Sallow . . . . . ☐	Black . . . . . ☐	Light . . ☐ Dark . . ☐
Freckled . . . . . ☐	LASHES	REDHEAD
Olive . . . . . ☐	Light . . . . . ☐	Light . . ☐ Dark . . ☐
SKIN	Dark . . . . . ☐	If hair is Grey, check type
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THE RED WAISTCOAT

When the mysterious legacy came to "Jim" Muttle, it was imperative that the widow of Bill Bly should save him from the hussies who sought his wealth

BY S. L. BENSUSAN

ILLUSTRATED BY W. J. TURNER

"SAKES alive, Jim, ain't ye lookin' smart!" said Mrs. Minnie Lay. Mr. Muttle was walking down the little High Street of Rasing Tye on that Sunday morning in the springtide gladness of the year and Mrs. Lay was not the only shrewd observer. Others were prompt to see that fortune had smiled on him. He was wearing a red waistcoat with brass buttons and he wore it with an air.

Something is needed to brighten James Jehoshophat Zerubabel Muttle, for not only is he short, black-haired and whiskered, with high cheek bones and tiny eyes, but his front name is not his own. When he was born to his peculiar parents, they applied to Ephraim the Carrier for a suitable name according to use and wont. That excellent man turned to the Bible, opened it on two pages at random, and chose one from each, with the result that Jehoshophat Zerubabel Muttle was entered in the parish register.

He worked at Tundon Mill, earning every penny of the two pounds a week he received, lived alone and was "turned out" once weekly by Widder Garbole. He wooed Nelly Bly, that large, middle-aged and florid woman who keeps the sweet shop, but she was cold to his advances even while accepting him for a friend. She is flamboyant and he is drab; she walks erect, he slouches. She looks the whole world in the face, even giving it a glad eye, on occasion; he glances at it furtively under thick eyelashes. Mrs. Bly will accept of him, as we say, when he comes to dig her ample garden; she will pay him with excellent tea and superlative toast to which dripping or bloater paste has been applied generously; she will hold him in friendly converse upon topics of local interest. But she gives him no chance of expressing the love that burns, perhaps it would be more correct to say smoulders modestly, or even simmers gently, within his rather narrow chest. He is, or was, too meek, too mild for Widder Bly; but now on this fair spring morning the sun, on its way up street in Rasing Tye, found nothing as bright and gay as Mr. Muttle's waistcoat, unless it were the unfamiliar smile above it. It was not so much that he was at peace with all the world as that he had taken all the world to be his province.

The "Sakes alive, Jim, ain't ye smart this mornin'" of Mrs. Lay has been set down, and Mr. Muttle, still smiling his satisfaction with life, replied briefly, "I bin come inter money, Minnie. Me owd uncle what lived in Rumbridge. Went off dead mos' a month agoo. I never heard on't till he bin buried. Ain't that a rum un? A lawyer bin an' found me out. Ain't that another rum un?" Mrs. Lay admitted that both happenings were nothing less.

"There's a lot o' rum things in this here world," continued Mr. Muttle, just as if he had looked in the glass, and once again Mrs. Lay was in agreement.

Though she is not so great a gossip as the most of her friends, Mrs. Lay is what she, herself, would call "same as a natural woman," and being that she could no less than spread the tidings. An uncle of Jim Muttle what lived at Rumbridge bin an' went off dead an' left his all to Jim being he was his nephew. Jim bin an' bought the headest red weskit ever anybody see, but he ha'n't give up th' owd mill, and this must be counted to him for righteousness, since it showed that fortune had not made him highful. He had given no details of his fortune; he had not said if it were large or small; the most he would admit in response to artful, but seemingly casual inquiry pouring in on all sides from both friends and acquaintances was that it was a tidy bit. But it was known that he had taken Mrs. Bly to the pichers in Market Waldron and given her a master tea at the "Lobster Pot," a superfine tea with s'rimps to start and cream cake to conclude.

Apart from this, it was admitted on all hands that in keeping hisself to hisself like, Jim Muttle, as the heir of a dead uncle, was no different from the Jim who was same as a common man like everybody else. And everybody was pleased, since it removed barriers; they could hold a rich man in easy converse and that gave them a sense of being on intimate terms with wealth.

Mrs. Bly had given the red weskit due meed of admiration, after being thrilled by the "pichers" full of revolvers and crooks; she had also eaten a very large tea and had infused a certain measure of warmth into her speech. Her modesty, which was almost maidenly, kept her from all reference to money matters, but she noted that Mr. Muttle paid for the 'bus with one Treasury note, for tickets with a second, for tea with a third, and for the 'bus home with a fourth. He pulled out a gold watch from the end of a gold chain at least twenty times during the afternoon, though there was an illuminated clock in the cinema and an active grandfather clock in the "Lobster Pot's" "privit settin' room." He also announced his intention of having "one o' them wirelesses." The lavishness in his acts of hospitality was most marked, extending to a large bunch of the choice spring flower called voyelets or voilets,

(*please turn to page* 30)

according to the standard of education, and a box of chocolate cakes. "That ain't no use buyin' sweets f'r th' likes o' you, Nelly," he had remarked, "bein' you sell sech."

"That's a true word, Jim," she had replied, and as they left the bus at the junction of the Rasing Tye—Maychester road she remarked, "Happen you kin come an' drink a dish o' tea along o' me come Sunday?"

"I'm behowden to ye, Nelly," he said, very happily, and squeezed her hand so genteelly that she was not much hurt. Indeed, she made no complaint, she is a widder; therefore to be wooed. She is a woman; therefore to be won.

Indeed, Widder Bly had considered the case in all its bearings. She knew nothing. There might be much or little in the uncle's legacy, but there was the weskit of a kind worn by few, there were the Treasury notes, there were voilets or voyelets and sponge cakes covered with chocolate. Furthermore there were other women, some widows (she could name three still of marriageable age) and spinsters a score, some of them slips of things not out of their 'teens, who lured men with lipstick and nail polish and all too revealing "costooms." They were an ever-present menace to her chances and the question she had to decide was whether she should surrender her single blessedness if called upon to do so and whether she should promote the calling.

Bill Bly, her late lamented, had been a decent sort of man except on rare occasions when he had been, as we say, "settin' in th' sun" and was noisy and went to bed in his boots and used language that would not be permitted in Parliament without moving the Speaker to protest, and spoke in high contempt of policemen. He was not without excuse, for he worked long hours on a barge and his was a thirsty job, he would plead along these lines on the morning after the night before.

Jim would never give way like that; he was sober, thrifty and now he had his red waistcoat Widder Bly's thoughts turned to various designing hussies from whom he could no longer be hidden; even if she could do without Jim as a husband, she needed him as a friend. He kept her garden in order, opened packing cases, prepared firewood and kindling, could mend a sash cord or make a window open and do a bit of rough carpentry well and was always content with tea and thanks. No hussy known to Ellen Bly would suffer him to do this work on her behalf if she captured him. Perhaps that is why the lady looked to the Sunday afternoon with an emotion that if it were not founded on love, was at least an expression of the practical outlook on life. Perhaps that is why she gave time to the cooking of dainties and the garnishing of the table.

Sunday afternoon brought Mr. Muttle, sunshine, the red waistcoat and a large bunch of wallflowers, to Widder Bly, a hearty welcome and an excellent meal to the guest. Mrs. Bly was, so to speak, on her mettle and the meat parsties with which a sufficiency of onion had been mixed were not only tasty but plentiful. When Mr. Muttle said, "they same as melt in y'r mouth, Nelly," such praise was hardly hyperbolical.

"You do look smart, Jim," said Mrs. Bly, seeking in her turn to maintain the sunshine.

"Not so bad," he admitted, cheerfully, glancing at his reflection in the looking-glass over the mantel shelf in the settin' room. "There ain't another man hereabouts got one like it, except it's Bill Timm, an' he should say that don't fit proper since he bin got married."

"It wouldn't," declared Mrs. Bly a little sharply. "That woman of his live f'r her stummick an' she got to feed him same as she feed herself."

"I don't set all that store by vittles, meself," admitted Mr. Muttle, "though I got a cousin be merriage what's just like Sarah Timm. But time a man's same as sharp set," he went on, "he set wunnerful store by meat parsties like these here; they same as do ye forever o' good. I'd ast Widder Garbole to make me some but I doubt she couldn't; she's forever old."

"A man wanter woman 'bout his own age to look arter him," mused Mrs. Bly, addressing the cat on the hearth rug. "He ain't himself without."

"A woman wanter man about th' house," mused Mr. Muttle, addressing himself to the canary, in one of the brief intervals it devotes to resting its gargantuan vocal cords. "He kin light her fire an' cut her wood an' pump her water an' tend her garden an' clean her boots an' help in th' shop come Saturday night, time she's busy." He might have said more had not the canary recovered strength and song.

"Oh do ha' done, Dick," cried his mistress, as she covered the cage with a duster. "There's times one can't git a word in edgeways, along o' you. A man," she went on, speaking so to say *in vacuo*, since to address the cat would be to set her guest at a great disadvantage, the canary having ceased to be a possible medium, "want a woman to tend his clothes an' have a proper meal waitin' f'r him time he come back from work. But that ain't to say he wanter come inter meals wi' dirty boots, or to smoke his pipe in th' settin' room. That aggravate a woman cruel."

"A man," admitted Mr. Muttle, talking as though to himself but quite audibly, "kin allus take off his boots in th' scullery an' he kin use th' scraper afore he brings 'em that far. An' he kin smoke his pipe in th' kitchen an' enjoy it if he like his baccy."

"I couldn't abide a man comin' home in beer," declared Mrs. Bly, and there was something of a direct approach in these words, sufficient at least to make Mr. Muttle, that cautious man, believe that the moment had come for direct address.

"I don't wonder," he said, "you had too much o' that afore, Nelly, not but that I liked Bill, mind ye. Barges is thirsty work, everybody gotter allow that much. But I'm a man what's allus used hisself reg'lar. A pint's as much as I want any time. A pint," he added, a faint note of determination in his voice, not entirely displeasing to his hostess, "a pint does a man good whiles."

"I count you're right, Jim," she said softly, "a man don't wanter goo on th' wagon altogether; it ain't natural."

Mr. Muttle stood up, the better to smooth the red waistcoat and sat down again. "If so be that's how you think o' things, Nelly," he said, frankly, "do let me speak f'r ye in Chu'ch nex' Sund'y. That don't do to live alone in this here world. Come a winter night time there's nobody about, this here's a lonely sort of a place. I got me job an' I've kep' it mos' twenty years. I bin come inter a mite o' money an' I'm useful along o' me han's. You might go fudderer an' fare wusser as they say, Nelly. I ain't much," he added, frankly, "but there's folk take notice o' me," and he smoothed the waistcoat that compels folk to do so.

She looked at him critically, but with a certain satisfaction.

"I'll accept of ye, Jim," she whispered.

"Thanky f'r me," he cried, "I'll ast f'r ye in Chu'ch right away."

The great news ran through marshland. Jim Muttle bin an' spoke for Nelly Bly. He had come into forever o' money and Nelly bin an' snapped him up afore anybody else could come interferin'.

In consideration of more than twenty years faithful service, Mr. Muttle was given a day off to be married and a pound note in further recognition. There could be no honeymoon, for the mill was busy and Mrs. Bly did not wish to admit any stranger to the mysteries of her shop, but she cooked an excellent wedding breakfast or lunch or dinner and the two shared it in happy solitude.

The first Saturday of their married life came round and Mr. Muttle handed over certain moneys to his wife.

"This ain't twenty-five, Jim," said the lady, "this is tharty-five."

"Weddin' breakfus," said Mr. Muttle, lightly, "an' th' last o' uncle's money."

"The last, Jim," cried his wife, a terrible sense of evil radiating from her solar plexus.

Very solemnly Mr. Muttle unbuttoned the red waistcoat and showed an inside pocket.

"He wore double cunnin', wore uncle," he explained. "Time he bin buried, his gel Maggie, what's me cousin, kep' all on findin' money here an' there. He'd got two fi' pun notes in a chiny vorze, an' a bag full o' silver under a board in his bedroom an' another fi' pun note in th' gran'father clock. Maggie should say he wore like a magpie f'r hidin' things. He'd jest wrapped my weskit in a piece o' paper an' writ 'Jim' on it an' seein' it was on'y a weskit I count Maggie never 'zamined it careful. That's a artful sort o' pocket if you ain't lookin' for it," he went on. "Time I wore foldin' it up the paper rastled an' I set to work an' found it, an' they changed it f'r me at the mill an' I took ye out to the pichers an' bin an' bought me wireless."

"That's a big wireless, Jim," said Mrs. Muttle.

"Biggest I could see," replied her husband, proudly. "A pun down an' half a crown a week f'r three year an' then it's me own. I dedn't tell ye afore, Nelly, fear you should think it worn't a lot o' money arter all, same as folk herealong make out."

"An' what about y'r gowd watch an' chine, Jim," pleaded his wife. "I ain't see it on ye, since ye took me to th' pichers."

"I borried it from Mrs. Chase at th' *Wheatsheaf*," he replied, frankly. "That belonged to her husban' an' I towd her I wanted to look extry smart like, bein' I was takin' ye out, an' I ha'n't bin able to git one f'r meself yet. That was a true word; I ha'n't."

There was a momentary struggle among Mrs. Muttle's emotions. Then the lady, looking up with a smile of happiness and content, cried, "That don't matter, Jim. Now we're merried, I wouldn't dolour if that on'y bin a pound he'd put in th' weskit. Money ain't everything in this here world."

She has every reason to be content.

Not only is Mr. Muttle an admirable house worker, who always leaves his boots in the washus, but business in sweets has gone up by leaps and bounds. People are properly eager to patronise a shop whose owner or owners have added wealth to matrimony and would probably be quite indifferent if no custom came.

Steel, Glass and Aluminium

"Colossal" is a much abused word, used to describe anything from an elephant to a film star's salary, but it seems strictly applicable to a feature which will be a highlight of Woman's Fair and Exhibition, at Olympia, in November.

This is a 42 feet high colonnade surrounded by a statue of Venus, 21 feet high and weighing two tons. With colonnade and statue towering to a height of 63 feet, this will be the tallest structure ever seen at Olympia

The work of Barney Seale, the sculptor, and Mr. A. King-Morgan, a London engineer and electrical consultant, the edifice will be constructed of steel, glass and aluminium.

Eleven tons of steel-work and twelve tons of plaster will be used, 2,400 square feet of specially designed glass will form the buttresses of the colonnade and 1,800 feet of silver beading will form a cascade of shining metal.

The whole structure will be brought to Olympia in sections and assembled piece by piece and, when completed, an enormous curtain will be raised behind it to provide a background of glorious colour. More than 2,000 feet of material will go into the making of this curtain which will be 90 feet wide and 63 feet high.

Also in the capable hands of Mr. King-Morgan are the lighting facilities and effects of the complete exhibition. In his Park Lane office, once the home of Disraeli, he is busy perfecting plans for a pageant of breath-taking illumination.

Specially designed, concealed fittings will be erected on every stand and 4,200 lamps and 51,000 feet of cable will be used. For floodlighting, unique reflectors combined with forty-four 1,000-watt and 2,000-watt lamps will bathe the scene in a cascade of light.

From a hidden switch-room containing two of the largest automatic colour-change mechanisms, engineers will control a vast "Cavalcade of Colour" provided by an entirely new system of coloured reflectors and lenses producing an amazing variety of colour changes.

Woman's Fair and Exhibition has been created to satisfy the need for an exhibition that will directly portray the needs of modern woman. Over 500,000 people are expected to visit Olympia during its three weeks' run from November 2nd to 26th.

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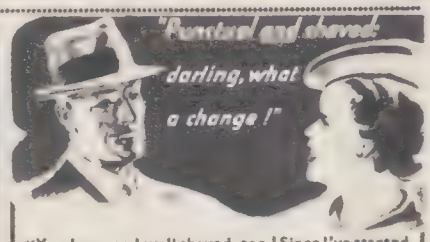

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Quite substantial rewards are offered for the return of torpedoes in the whole or just parts of them

REWARDS IN WAITING

BY VINCENT BROME

IT probably resembles a large, tin fish with fins and a snub nose, and looks quite rusty and useless. Stumbling upon it on some lonely foreshore you reflect that the sea spews up strange things—and move on again.

That large, tin fish may be worth anything up to thirty pounds. The Admiralty offers fat rewards for the return of lost torpedoes.

Their regulations lay down these rewards in somewhat complicated form. Briefly, in the event of a torpedo being lost during practice and not found the same day, a reward of five pounds is offered. That reward can be increased at the discretion of the Commander-in-Chief, to a maximum figure of thirty pounds.

If circumstances indicate that the torpedo has sunk, the reward may touch fifty pounds. Again at the discretion of the Commander-in-Chief.

Torpedoes are sturdily built, but the sea can break them up quickly. Don't be discouraged if you find only a fragment. Payment is made, in such circumstances, pro rata; according to the size of the portion found, so you get a large or small part of the reward.

The time limit for these rewards is a little obscure, but you can take it that your claim will certainly be met if you present it within three months of the torpedo's disappearance. Sometimes, of course, you cannot discover when it was lost until you have consulted the local authorities.

Payment is not made by the ship concerned. Claims are verified by the officer in charge of the Naval Shore Signal Station, or by the coastguard station, and they tell you when and by whom the reward will be paid.

You may find your particular bit of torpedo somewhat difficult to transport single handed, or even difficult to dig out of the sand. You can still recover a reward. £1 is paid for reports on torpedoes washed ashore. This also applies to mines.

Floating mines recovered more than two miles off-shore are worth anything up to five pounds. Within the two mile limit, two pounds is the minimum reward.

Paravanes are inclined to be more profitable than mines. They use paravanes to protect shipping against mines. Find one and the Admiralty will pay you a minimum of five pounds, or pro rata, according to the size and nature of any part of a paravane and where it is found.

Probably you think your chances of recovering torpedoes, mines or paravanes are pretty remote. Well, these contrivances littered the different oceans in such abundance during 1934 that they called an International Convention to settle the problem. Finally, in Paris, they sealed and signed an agreement setting down just what governments were willing to pay for their recovery.

Information resulting in the recovery of a torpedo lost by another government was worth, they thought, two pounds. Torpedoes found more than two miles from any coast—thirty pounds. In each case it was understood that the torpedo must remain fit for use.

Where the torpedo was too badly damaged to serve any purpose, they reduced the rewards to one pound in the first case, and fifteen pounds in the second.

Apart from the Admiralty, a variety of different ministries in this country, offer rewards. You won't make a fortune from the Ministry of Fisheries, but at least you may realise three times the value of a normal fish. Discover one of their marked fish—you cannot mistake them—and they will pay two shillings, providing you explain precisely where you found it. A number of crabs scattered around our coasts also carry the Ministry's mark. They are worth a shilling each. The Metropolitan Police, in one recent year, spent £1,200 on rewards. They are constantly wanting information. Every other police station carries its "Reward Offered" board. Valuations vary according to the circumstances, and there are few set standards of payment.

The Meteorological Office periodically releases special balloons designed to measure air pressures and atmospheric conditions. They may drift to any part of the country before descending.

Usually the balloon reaches rarefied atmospheres and bursts. A small parachute automatically opens and the instruments in the balloon float safely to earth. You can quickly identify them. They carry a small disc asking for their return to the Observatory at Kew.

So if you see a small parachute drifting

down somewhere, don't immediately think it is some child's toy. In all probability it belongs to the Meteorological Office. They pay five shillings for every one returned.

Rewards are scarce at the G.P.O. There appear to be two only. Half-a-crown is offered for the return of the leather pouch carrying mail-bag time documents and keys. Another shilling for any official Post Office pass. The leather pouch carries a small notice setting out details of the reward. The passes you cannot fail to recognise.

Inland Revenue, Somerset House, pays certain rewards for income tax information. The word "informer" carries a somewhat unpleasant meaning, but the income tax people see no reason why any citizen shouldn't pay his full whack, and welcome the informer. Actually, of course, they have their own sleuths—positive genii at ferreting out hidden sources of income—which makes the competition there decidedly keen.

Most local councils offer small rewards for information which leads to the apprehension of anyone damaging their road signs. The Automobile Association offers two pounds for information about the gentlemen who cannot resist the impulse to carve their initials on the familiar yellow plates.

Deliberately setting out to earn any of these rewards is rather a tiresome business. You might walk fifty miles in the country hoping a meteorological parachute will drop like manna from heaven—and get nothing but rain. Far better to leave it to chance. Providing you know and can remember what rewards are offered.

GINGER FOR PLUCK

Continued from page 7

"We'll have no more of that nonsense, indeed!" sounded Hetty's voice, following, shrilly, his retreat. "It's a good job dear Constance has someone to look after her! But don't think that you've heard the last of. . . ."

At this point Mr. Lamb's ears ceased to register the sounds of this female voice. A scrape on the fencing was followed by a soft pad on a level with his ear. A ginger red streak poised for a moment, light as a feather, on the top of the fence, then dropped, silent as a falling leaf, at his feet.

At the sight of Satan, Mr. Lamb's heart beat up into his throat. The hot blood sang in his ears. His shame was forgotten in one exulting swoop as he gathered the brute up to his cheeks. You would have thought he was frightened that at any moment the cat might disappear as suddenly as he had come, so tightly did he clutch it.

Setting the cat down, at length, his eyes hardened. He moved deliberately round the bushes with grim purpose in his stride. A queer tight line marked his lips. "One moment, Hetty!" he called. "We haven't finished our little talk yet."

"Indeed we haven't," the spinster had begun before she noticed Mr. Lamb's smouldering eyes. "That is, I'm——"

"Don't go!" He jumped round to get between her and the house. "I've been waiting a long time to tell you what I'm going to tell you now. How dare you interfere with my cat! Whose house is this, I'd like to know? Is it yours, or mine? Go on; answer me!"

"Why—it's your house, of course, Sydney, and I wouldn't for a moment——"

"Yes you would. You'd do anything. For years you've been poisoning Constance, leading her to believe this and that. Giving her a grievance for your own ends. Well, it's going to finish. This time you've gone too far! Taking the cat to the police station!"

"Constance thought——"

"Don't interrupt! I don't believe it. I think it would be better for us all if you took a little holiday, and as far as I'm concerned the sooner you start the better."

For a moment Hetty let her eyes linger in hatred on Satan arching himself sensuously over and about Mr. Lamb's shoes, purring his utter content. Like a dynamo it sent throbbing power along the nervous system of his master, and she was helpless to cut off the supply. "I wouldn't dream of staying another moment in this house," she sniffed. "Poor Constance!"

"Leave Constance alone!" thundered Mr. Lamb, and with that echoing sentiment he became pridefuliy conscious of a face at the bedroom window above. "For a long time something has been growing between Connie and myself that shouldn't be there. That thing is you. YOU! D'you hear me? And now. . . ."

A faint cry from the window marked the start of Hetty's flight, but Mr. Lamb had not finished with her. Years of repressions were breaking loose, and he knew now that they would never be bottled up again. He concluded his observation through the keyhole of his sister-in-law's bedroom door, which was firmly bolted against him. Then he walked across the landing to his wife's room.

"Constance!" he barked. "What's the matter with all you women? Unlock your door at once!"

"Constance, dear!" sounded a muffled wail from across the landing. "Be prudent! He's not safe, and——"

"Are you going to unlock this door?" Mr. Lamb demanded of his wife, and there was something in his voice that reminded her of an evening long ago when Sydney had got himself into a fight with a cab man. Something that thrilled her.

"What is it, darling?" she asked, when he pushed into her room.

"Your sister," he announced, unnecessarily, "is leaving us for a holiday. She objected to Satan. You understand that I won't have him interfered with?"

Tremors were chasing each other up and down her spine and for a shattering moment she wondered if, perhaps, he were going to beat her, or throw her out of the window, or, even, strangle her with his bare hands.

"Of course, darling," she faltered "Oh, Sydney. . . . I was a pig about your cat!"

In the act of taking up the point Mr. Lamb found himself smothered in a feminine avalanche that descended on his breast.

"Really, Constance, the man isn't safe!" sounded across the landing. "Don't unlock that door whatever you——"

"Shut up, you!" he yelled. "Connie," he complained, "do you have to hold on to me like this?"

For reply she clung tighter, and it seemed now that she had begun to sob. "For heaven's sake!" he began, when he caught sight, over Connie's shoulder, of Satan.

That magnificent cat was watching him with amber eyes that never blinked. Critically, it seemed to Mr. Lamb, who was conscious that in these tender affairs, a cat such as Satan would have a fund of experience far beyond the scope of a mere human.

Prising up her moist face he kissed her roughly and worked himself loose. "I have to fetch a cab for your sister," he growled. "Calm yourself, woman!"

Straightening his coat he turned severely away from this adoring wife.

Satan joined him with dignity as he reached the door, and from the look the two exchanged Mr. Lamb noted, with growing satisfaction, that he had taken the right line.

In fact, approval of the whole affair shone like a beacon light in those amber eyes

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Father: "*Did you see the Managing Director?*"
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Father: "*And what happened then?*"
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Father: "*Did he know about Pelmanism*"
Son: "*Rather, said it was a fine training and that a friend of his, a Cabinet Minister, recommended it, not only to young men, but for everyone, and said it would be a good thing if it were compulsory in every secondary school throughout the country.*"
Mother: "*I always said Pelmanism was a good investment. Look at the thousands of testimonials they publish, and the way in which people like Sir Herbert Barker, Canon Hannay, Baroness Orczy, Lord Baden-Powell, Dame Sybil Thorndike, and hosts of business leaders speak of it, and I read the other day that the famous journal 'Truth' had stated that 'Pelmanism places the means of progress within reach of everyone.'*"
Father: "*Well, when do you commence with them?*"
Son: "*As early as I can possibly manage it. I must leave my present job perfectly straight.*"
Father: "*What about salary?*"
Son: "*I am getting nearly DOUBLE my present salary, and prospects of more to come. If I hadn't been a Pelmanist I should never have had the pluck and confidence to ask for it, but I know I can earn every penny of it, and it will pay ——s too.*"

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TO-DAY, every reader of "The Passing Show" is given an opportunity to accept, practically as a Gift, a marvellous new £5 5s. course entitled "GOOD ENGLISH—HOW TO SPEAK AND WRITE IT." This great Course is based on an amazing, entirely new Plan which for the first time, will enable the average person to speak and write good English without having to master hundreds of difficult rules and principles or undertake months of arduous study. Almost everyone makes mistakes in English!

By an ingenious Self-correcting method this unique Course actually discovers for us the mistakes which we unconsciously make when speaking or writing, and shows us how to cure ourselves of these errors. This Course consists of Ten Books and a 64-page Tutor which forms an invaluable guide throughout the Course. Here is a Course for which, in the ordinary way, you would think even £5 5s. a small price to pay. Yet, we repeat, it is yours practically AS A GIFT! In order that you can begin right away, the First Book, together with the 64-page Tutor, will be sent by return. There is no waiting! The remaining nine Books will be sent to you one by one every fortnight. When this Course is officially announced the demand will be tremendous. All applications will be dealt with in strict rotation! Fill in the Forms on the opposite page and post them at once!

THOUSANDS to-day realise that their English needs a little "polishing," and millions more make mistakes but are unaware of the wrong habits into which they have fallen. Few believe that anything short of wading laboriously through the complicated pages of a book on English can possibly help them. **But this great new Course proves they are wrong!** It turns the mastery of Good English into something easy, fascinating, interesting, challenging—something that you'll enjoy doing. It brings "Good English" within easy reach of every man, woman and child—helping them to correct their pronunciation, punctuation, spelling and writing and to attain a command of our language that means so much to success in life!

AMAZING NEW SELF-CORRECTING SYSTEM

It doesn't make you study what you already know. It doesn't force you suddenly to make drastic changes in your present way of speaking and writing. You begin by pronouncing as you always pronounce, by speaking as you always speak, by spelling, writing and punctuating as you normally do.

HOW DOES THE COURSE WORK?

What then, is the secret? *It is the amazingly simple yet absolutely can't-go-wrong system of Self-correction!* When you get the first Book you look at a page, make a few decisions, and then the self-corrector gets to work and in a FLASH you see mistakes which you've been making for years and didn't even know you were making! You then see where and why you are wrong and—this is the amazing value of the system—*each mistake is instantly brought home to you in such a way that you need never make it again!*

DO YOU MAKE THESE MISTAKES?

999 people out of every 1,000 make mistakes in English. Do you spell **"calendar," "calender" or "calander"**? Do you say **"between you and I"** or **"between you and me,"** or use **"who"** when you should use **"whom"**? Do you pronounce **COMparable, comPARable**? Do you know when and where to use commas, stops and colons in order to make your meaning absolutely clear?

GOOD ENGLISH IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS!

As you proceed with this Course you begin to write and speak in a more accurate way. Your conversation takes on a sparkle and life that grips, holds and convinces others. Your letters become interesting. You see for yourself what a tremendous power there is in words—what a wonderful key this Course is with which to open a way to success, friends and happiness.

★ *Here is a brief summary of the scope of the complete Course. Each Book in this Course deals with a certain stage of every one of the undermentioned subjects:* ★

PRONUNCIATION.—Start with your own pronunciation. What sounds do you mispronounce? Which words do you say wrongly? You yourself don't know until the Course tests you, picks out your mistakes, and puts you right.

SELF-EXPRESSION: CONVERSATION.—The troubles of the tongue-tied—awkwardness in company—are you ashamed of your accent? How to open a conversation. How to use your voice. Avoiding monotony—how to acquire emphasis and expression. Talking with employers—how to give advice. The art of persuading others—acquiring tact. How to speak to the other sex—the approaches women like—the art of paying compliments—how to keep men interested—knowing when to finish. Clear thinking—how to argue—organising one's thoughts quickly. How to make friends through brighter conversation.

PUNCTUATION: FROM A TO Z.—Do you always know a sentence when you see one? When should you use capitals? How to master the hundred uses of the comma without learning one rule. How to use the semi-colon, colon, dash and brackets. Hyphens and where to put them. How punctuation makes for clarity and emphasis.

VOCABULARY.—This part of the Course is *not* a dictionary, but a valuable and practical way of increasing the stock of words you use and of ensuring that you are using them correctly.

CORRECT ENGLISH USAGE.—What good usage is and how to master it. Why grammar books cannot correct your mistakes. The new way of achieving correct English. Discovering what you personally do right as well as what you do wrong.

SPELLING.—Whatever your spelling ability, it can be improved by 90 per cent. or more. Whatever your spelling errors, they can be reduced by nine-tenths. What are the most commonly mis-spelled words? The quickest way to end spelling errors. How to master spelling from first to last.

SELF-EXPRESSION: WRITING.—Communication of Ideas. How to avoid vagueness. Finding the right words for your thoughts. Phrases and forceful expression. Sentences and paragraphs—paragraph-building. The art of writing to friends. What SHALL I write about? A letter asking a favour. Letters expressing things vividly. Applying for a job.

The 10 Books in this Course and the 64-page Tutor are compact and light—they measure 5½ inches wide by 8½ inches deep—a handy pocket size. Each Book, including the 64-page Tutor, is perfectly printed in clear type on white opaque paper. The volumes have strong texture covers.

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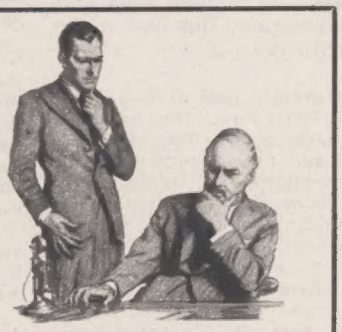
Children always imitate grown-ups, and the people they copy most closely are their parents. If you are careless about grammar and pronunciation so will they be. Take this Course and you will be able to guard your children from using slovenly and incorrect speech.



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This valuable Course, which on these terms is exclusive to the "Daily Herald," comes to you Section by Section—each costing practically nothing! All you do is Reserve the Course at once simply by completing and sending in as directed, the Reservation Form and Label on the right. On receipt of the Forms, together with FOURPENCE HALFPENNY (three 1½d. stamps), the "Daily Herald" will immediately send you your First Book, together with the 64-page Tutor, and your 9 Official Vouchers entitling you to obtain the remaining 9 Books. At the same time arrangements will be made for your 9 Books to be specially produced, ready for dispatch to you—one every two weeks.

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THIS Form reserves the complete 10 Books of the Course in your name and brings you Book No. 1 and the 64-page "Tutor" by return.

Address your envelope to the "Daily Herald" exactly as shown below and post to:

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"Daily Herald," Neal Street,
London, W.C.2. (Pref.).

The Label on the right must be enclosed with this Form. You must fill it in with your name and full postal address in block letters and affix a THREE-HALFPENNY stamp to the space provided. This Form and Label together with **THREE LOOSE THREE-HALFPENNY STAMPS** (4½d.) must be posted in a sealed envelope bearing three-halfpenny stamp.

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NEXT WEEK

AT rare intervals there arises an author with a personality so forceful and a genius so bright that he seems to bestride the literary world like a Colossus. And even if the foregoing *does* read like the start of a publisher's inspired blurb, we make no apologies, for Jack London, the author we have in mind, was one of the most romantic, dominating figures of his or any other day.

Not only was Jack London, whose life-story, "Sailor on Horseback," starts next week, an author whose stories enjoy a world-wide popularity, he was also a man whose days were packed with adventure and excitement. Himself as colourful as any of the characters he pictures so vividly, he was by turns, sailor, tramp, labourer, gold prospector in the Klondyke, war correspondent in Manchuria and rancher.

There must be few people who have not thrilled at such of his masterpieces as "The Call of the Wild," "White Fang," "The Valley of the Moon" and "The Cruise of the Snark"; and now comes the opportunity to read the story of their famous author. "Sailor on Horseback" reveals Jack London as a man whose indomitable courage, tremendous energy and unflagging zest for adventure filled his life with thrills and excitement.

Next week's number, in which you will find pictures in full colour, contains the first of a series of stories by Walter D. Edmonds, whose flair for capturing the atmosphere of a century ago is unsurpassed. Young Ames, who is the central character in the new series, is the junior clerk in the New York firm of Chevalier, Deming and Post, and in next week's story, "Young Ames Meets the Ship," you will read how his enterprise enabled him to corner the news when a vessel from England reached Sandy Hook with the first word of the London cotton market.

Also in next week's issue, which is our Motor Show number, J. Murray Smith tells you a lot about the weird and wonderful cars of a quarter of a century ago, comparing them with the modern marvels now on the road. And it will be seen that car construction has certainly progressed more than somewhat since those far-off days when chugging motors were preceded by gentlemen bearing a red flag.

YOU'RE TELLING US!

WE have far too much sympathy with Youth to join the vast army of sourpusses who are for ever drooling on about the iniquities and shortcomings of the young of the species. To hear some of them in full spate, you might well think everyone under twenty-five was a cross between a congenital idiot and an habitual criminal, which, as Old Man Euclid was so fond of wise-cracking, is absurd.

So we certainly do appreciate it when one of the aforesaid young comes along with a problem for us to solve; it makes us feel all avuncularly benevolent and full of wise saws and instances, and vaguely like one of the Cherryble Brothers.

We were, therefore, glad to receive the following letter from "Perplexed" of Salop. "I have grown up with the PASSING SHOW and it seems to be making a better job of it than I am," he confesses. "I lack the enchanting, inviting cover; the entertainment and wisdom within; and the knowledge shown at the end, for I have no 'You're Telling Us!' department. And so I am telling you my problem."

Having arranged that bouquet in the office vase, we read on. "I am a bank clerk at what is called the Threshold of Life," explains "Perplexed." "Which

way shall I turn? To the one that leads to the studious, conscientious bank manager or to that which leads to the light-hearted, easy-going, pleasure-loving and pleasure-seeking bank clerk? I can't manage both, for I've tried."

Well, painful experience has taught us that bank managers can be more intimidating than a sergeant-major, more coldly sceptical than a divorce court judge and more unbending than a man with bad lumbago. Many a time have we shivered in an icy overdraft while the custodian of the cash, sitting grimly on the old, oak chest, has growled on about collateral securities and other fearsome wild fowl before driving us out into the hard world, abashed and uncomforted.

It seems, therefore, that "Perplexed" has a wonderful chance to help not only himself but suffering humanity if he will be studious and conscientious enough to reach bank managerial status and at the same time retain enough lightness of heart, ease of going and love of pleasure to show sympathy with primrose pathfinders in a practical way. In fact, we promise to

transfer our overdraft to his care as soon as he lands the job.

Recently we made passing reference to the fact that in her more sportive moments, Great Aunt Agatha indulged in a little all-in tatting. We never thought that those words, so lightly penned, would earn us a mild rebuke, but so it was. From Kirkby Lonsdale in Westmorland, Miss Heather M. Ewar sped valiantly to the defence of her sister-tatters, writing: "I wonder why you insinuate that tatting and old ladies complete with wicker basket, parrot cage, mahogany whatnot and cameo brooch are inseparable.

"In this district," she continues, defiantly, "there are several girls who love dancing, going to the cinema, exploring the fells on foot and the dales awheel and all such things in which modern girlhood delights. In fact, one of the girls is a Keep Fit instructress—yet they all tat. So next time you see a strapping, sunburnt girl attired in a pair of practical shorts, ask her to turn out her pockets and don't be surprised when she tips out a tatting shuttle or two."

The very thought of asking a strapping girl in practical shorts to turn out her pockets fills us with bashful terror and, anyway, the turning out of pockets has long been a feminine prerogative, but as we cannot let Miss Ewar give us a tit for tat without summing up for the defence, we gave ourselves up to thought. A gentle cough made us open our eyes some half hour later, and there was the willowy form of Psyche Sock, the Sprung Poetess, whose minor verse is universally recognised as a major calamity. Having adjusted her moiré-ribboned pince-nez she read Miss Ewar's letter; then, breathing heavily through both nostrils, seized our writing pad and abruptly exploded into the following deathless verse:

Maids who hike and bike in costumes
that reveal their nether limbs
Love to wield the nimble shuttle ere the
eye grows weak and dims,
And in sweet confabulation you will
oft-times here them say:
"Better fifty minutes tatting than a
cycle, any day."
Yet I doubt not, as we're ageing, one
increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of tatting strengthen
with the setting of our suns.

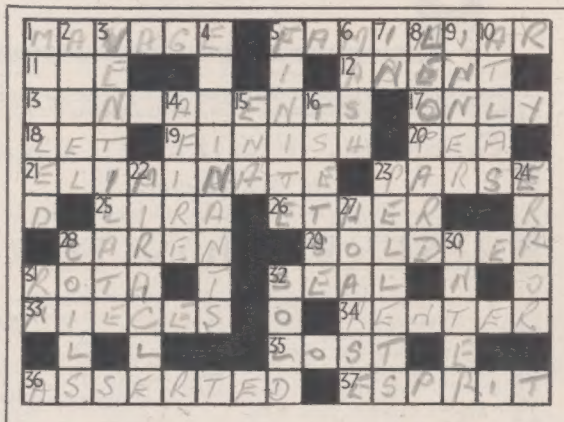
Bearing, as it does, the Lockesley Hall-mark of Victorian poetry, Miss Sock's verse seems to sum up our own point of view, namely and to wit that the fact we associated tatting with a lady who is now as long in the tooth as she is short in the wind, is not to be taken as meaning that we ever implied the young are not tat-conscious. In fact, we boldly assert that Miss Ewar has been barking up a non-existent tree.

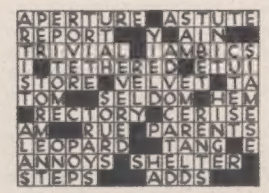
And now that we have learnt on expert authority that our British girlhood does not regard tatting as a pursuit to be followed only by those who are fast approaching the sere and yellow, it would be interesting to know if any ladies of advancing years explore the fells on foot and the dales awheel attired in a pair of practical shorts.

By a coincidence, we have just received a little note from B. J. O'Donnell of Columbus, Ohio, who reminds us that there is a long, long story about the girls who go to work in the button department of a big shirt factory and sew on, and sew on, and sew on. . . .

YOU'RE TELLING US! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters," "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss

FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT





Solution to last week's puzzle

CLUES ACROSS

1. Control.
5. Well acquainted.
11. Rue in a river.
12. Concerning something.
13. Outlines or features.
17. Singly.
18. Permit.
19. Terminate.
20. Sweet variety is not the edible one.
21. Take out or leave out.
23. Spare to fit here.
25. Coin.
26. This could be there.
28. Sign of omission.
29. Warrior.
31. Roll of duties.
32. Finishing touch.
33. Relatives.
34. One who makes a payment.
35. Location unknown.
36. Ate dress (anagram).
37. Sprite for animation.

CLUES DOWN

1. Fooled or duped.
2. Window.
3. Change of air.
4. Names, probably for a post.
5. Has beginning and end.
6. Sausage accompaniment.
7. Significant part of 9.
8. Notorious for spots.
9. Nearer centre than outskirts.
10. Mountains of northern Africa.
14. Ablaze.
15. Turned about she opens 12 across.
16. Double named pest.
22. Extraordinary happening.
23. Small spheres.
24. Deviation from rectitude.
27. A horse so would be husky.
28. Rings.
30. Put in the earth.
31. Brief reference to one of the forces.
32. Transaction successfully terminated.

B262 ★21★

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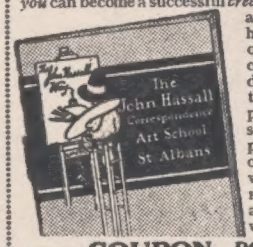

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